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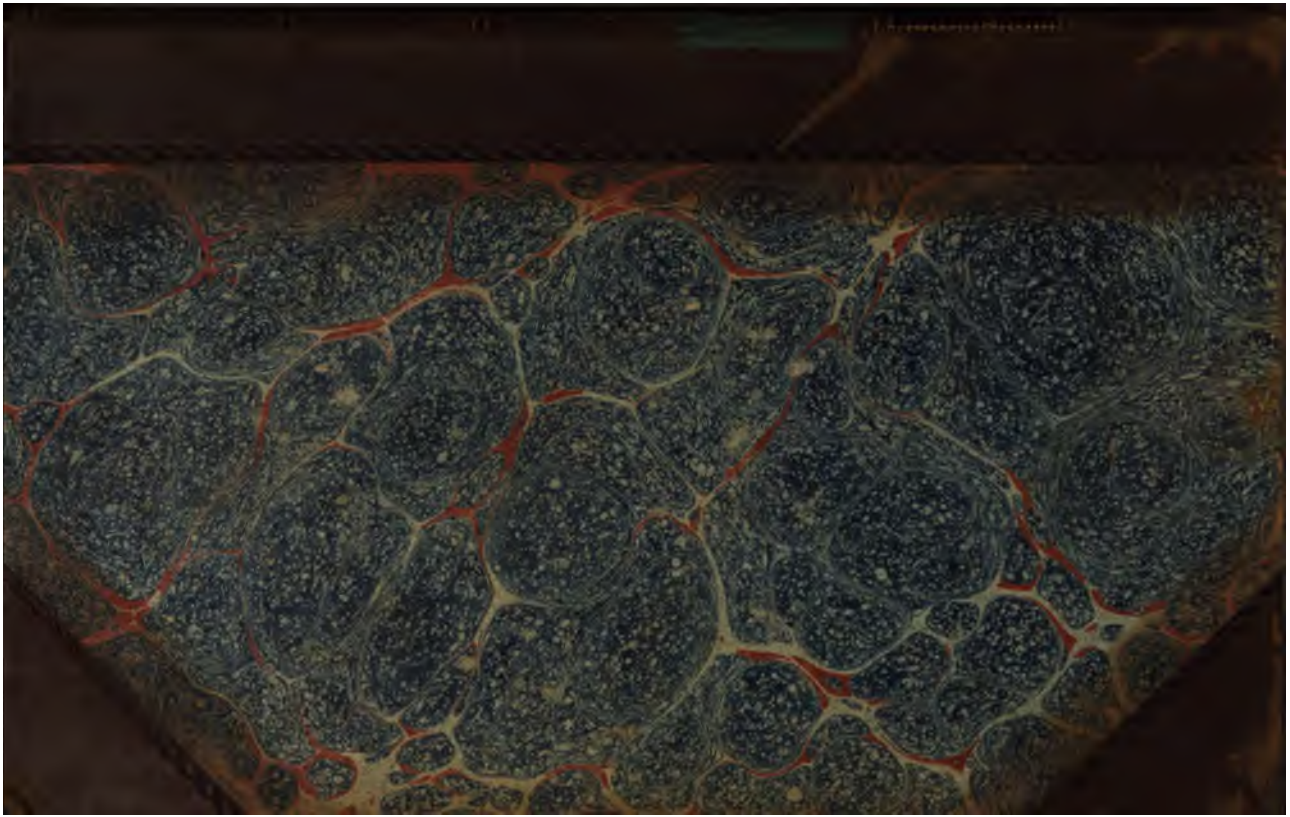
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THE

AFFLICTIONS OF LIFE,

WITH

THEIR ANTIDOTES.

BY

MRS. HENRY CRUSO.

LONDON:
J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY.
1836.

56.



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DEDICATION.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF KENT.

MADAM,

AN unexpected favour naturally calls forth gratitude; one that is undeserved, as well as unexpected, defies my powers of expressing my feelings in return. The fact that the simple statement of my object in publishing the following pages drew from your Royal Highness your immediate consent to this Dedication, couched in terms as kind as they were gracious, speaks for itself, and will be embalmed in my memory while I travel my appointed pilgrimage on this side of the grave.

That your Royal Highness may see realised in your illustrious daughter every imagination that you have cherished — every hope that you have indulged — and every wise effort for her welfare that you have made, is the earnest prayer of every English-woma, and most fervently of your Royal Highness's

Most devoted,

And most obliged Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

November 7th, 1836.

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SEPARATION AND CONSTANCY.

" Thou still dost hold
That little talisman of gold,
Pledge of my faith."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

SEPARATION AND CONSTANCY.

CHAPTER I.

"WHY those tears, dearest?" said Sir Nicolas Leak to his young and beautiful wife, as on turning to present her with a sprig of sweet-brier, which he had just gathered, he saw them chasing each other down her pale but expressive countenance. But if he expected an answer to this question he was disappointed. Now that her emotion was discovered, she had no longer power to check it, and leaning her head on her husband's shoulder, Lady Leak burst into unrestrained sorrow, and for some time sobbed convulsively. Tenderly, but in silence, for he feared

to increase that anguish he wished to soothe, Sir Nicolas encircled his wife with his arm, and led her to a garden-seat, from which was visible the most beautiful part of their domain. Here they had spent many a happy hour, gazing, perhaps, with a little pride on the lovely views which surrounded them, and on the mansion of a long line of ancestors, which was now almost lost in distance and the mists of evening gathering around. Not until he was seated, did Sir Nicolas remember that this scene was less likely than any other to calm his lady. He himself gazed on it with a look of regret, and involuntarily sighed deeply. This sigh had more effect in restoring his wife to self-possession than any other means he could have adopted; she struggled to conquer her feelings, and dashing the tears from her eyes, raised her head and smiled affectionately on him.

"Why these tears, indeed?" said she, with a touch of playfulness in her voice and manner; "have I not cause to weep, for is not my liege lord about to desert me for I know not how long a time? Is he not going to leave this happy home, enchanting Sutton; and his yet more enchanting bride (for, only married

six months, I may yet so call myself) while some of our ceremonial visits are yet unpaid? and I heard the doctor's wife whisper at mass the other day, 'What! have you not seen Lady Leak before? Know you not that the whole neighbourhood have been giving fêtes on her account; or, rather I should say, on her husband's, for Sir Nicolas is beloved by every one?' With what pleasure, dearest, did I listen to this praise! And how proudly did my heart beat that I was the favoured wife of such an one, in whom no one can find a fault, much less his Anna! And now all my happiness has vanished. Like a shadow it has past, and the recollection of it will soon be all that is left. Do you ask then why I weep? Is it not more wonderful that my eyes have ever been bright with pleasure, or my face dressed with smiles, since that fatal cross was reared in England to call the brave and chivalrous from peaceful happy homes, to find, perchance, bloody graves in Palestine?" Thus speaking, she turned her face away to hide the quivering lip and starting tear, which the last thought had again called forth.

"Say not *fatal*, beloved," said the hus-

band; "surely, surely not! Call it what it is — the beacon of honour, the trial of principle, and the test of religion. You would not have me desert that standard, you would not have me sleep the inglorious sleep of peace, while all the young, the brave, and the pious are calling for their arms, and hurrying with the gallant Edward to rescue Jerusalem from the Turks—the holy sepulchre from infidels? Speak the word, Anna, and I will remain; my name once—" here he was eagerly interrupted.

"Will you, indeed? oh! do you promise me not to leave Sutton—not to quit your own wife the hope you have of ere long being a father?—shall I then still enjoy your dear society?—still ramble with you through these beautiful shades?—shall I still hear the tones of affection from your lips, or listen to your accents while you instruct your unlearned simple wife, in the holy lessons of Scripture? Oh! speak, repeat to me that I shall yet have you for my protector and guide!" And she took his hand and pressed it eagerly between her own, and gazed at him with a look of delight which he could scarcely support. For a moment he was silent, and

shaded his face with his hand. When he withdrew it, the trace of deep emotion was on it, but he spoke in a composed manner, though in a lower voice than usual.

"I repeat my words, if you wish me to remain, I will. But think well on the consequences. My name dishonoured—myself despised—looked coldly on by those older lords whom age or the wishes of the king detain in England—branded as a coward—an alien to chivalry, still worse to my God—could I, could you, bear this? Where would be the pride with which you now behold your too highly-applauded husband? Nay, would not you yourself hate the contemptible wretch you had made—would not my children blush at the pusillanimity of their father?" He paused, and his wife again spoke in a low murmuring tone.

"Cruel to force me thus to send you from me! You know too well that, much as I love you, your honour is infinitely dearer to me. But how, how shall I support myself? You will blame me, I know, but this evening something whispers me more strongly than ever, (call it presentiment if you will,) that if I ever see you more, many years will elapse.

Something says, that I shall sit in loneliness, and watch year after year roll on, before your return. Perhaps time may have changed us both so much, that no vestige of our present selves will remain, or (which is still more dreadful) you may never, never return, and then, oh! what will be my fate?"

"Dearest Anna! draw not such a dismal picture. Believe it, love, I shall soon return crowned with glory to meet my own faithful wife, in perfect happiness and virtue."

"But," said she sadly, "*if* you should not —you have told me I must not fear to look at what is possible, alas! too probable. If *you should not return*, for years perhaps you may be imprisoned—I cannot bear to think of death—perhaps for a length of time I may hear no tidings of my husband; the uncertainty—"

"True," he said, interrupting her with a serious and melancholy look, "and I may return and find my Anna the wife of another."

"Never, never," she exclaimed eagerly; "you wrong me by the thought. I swear never to be the wife of any other man."

"Hush, my love! make no rash vows; if indeed death—" he stopped, and then con-

tinued with a half smile, "you surely infect me by your fears. But I wish we could think of some pledge—some talisman." He pressed her hand to his lips as he spoke, and in doing so, his eyes fell on a small but curiously interwoven ring, which had been his first gift to his betrothed.

"Ha!" said he, "this little ring, the pledge of love, shall also be the pledge of constancy." He took it from her finger, and dividing it into two, presented her with one part of it. "If you ever behold these halves again united, the tidings of my fate, be it prosperous or adverse, will be certain. Listen to me, love; if I again present you with the half of this ring, as I trust in God I shall, all unhappiness will be for ever banished; I shall have returned crowned with laurels to the paradise I am about to desert; if, on the contrary, I should fall, some one of my retinue will assuredly escape, and my last action in life shall be to give it to one on whom I may depend, to carry to my wife. If you receive it from any other hand than the one now clasped in yours, look on it as a pledge from the grave—that he who first placed it on your finger is happy—that his

earthly pilgrimage is over—and that he is gone to receive a reward from the Lord of battles, in whose service he fell. And then, dearest, mourn not his early fate, but think on him as one clothed in the martyr's robes, crowned with their diadem—as one whose sins will all have been expiated by his death. But that the prayers of the poor and faithful may embalm my memory and call down blessings on my descendants, either on the day of my patron saint, or on the anniversary of my departure, distribute alms or bread to the poor of Sutton. Again, I say, until this ring meets your eye, Anna, consider me still living."

"Indeed, my dearest husband," replied Lady Leak, "until I see again united my much-valued ring, I will nourish hope in expectation of your return. How, indeed, could I bear disappointment?"

"I trust you will not have that to endure," answered Sir Nicolas; "as your fears led to it, I have provided for the worst. But think not that I anticipate it. No, hope whispers me that in little more than a year I shall return, loaded with honours, to press to my faithful heart my darling wife, and, I trust, lovely child. But should you mourn our se-

paration, look, dearest, on the cross that rests on your bosom, and fear not—murmur not. That God who provides for the poor and needy, who feeds the raven, and clothes even the flower of the field, will not forget us. His providence will defend us, and our patron saint, St. Nicolas, will delight in obeying his behests, and in succouring and supporting us. The good father Jerome will supply the place of your present instructor in all respects, and read to you those Scriptures in the study of which, more liberal than the clergy in general, he has assisted me. Our child, too—will it not be a constant source of pleasure to you? You may believe me, the time which will pass before we meet will not go on heavy wheels. Constant and innocent occupation, and pleasant anticipations, will quicken its movements —nay, I should not much wonder if you are *surprised* at finding how soon we meet again?"

"I admire your sophistry," said she, with a faint smile, "and wish that your prophecies may prove true."

As her husband watched the smile flit over her face, he rose hastily.—"You are tired, my love, and look pale and exhausted, and I

am forgetting that the damps of evening are falling around. Let us hasten home."

She took his arm, and quickly and in silence they proceeded to their home.

CHAPTER II.

THE sun's first rays were scarcely visible above the horizon, when Sir Nicolas Leak joined his train, to quit the home of his ancestors. True it is, that when he sprung into his saddle, and called to his men-at-arms to follow him, his bosom swelled with grief, and the tear for a moment glistened in his eye, for he was leaving behind him all that he loved—all that had hitherto formed his happiness on earth; and on every side some loved view, endeared by youthful associations, increased his regret. He thought on the many happy days he had spent on this favourite spot when yet but a boy. Recollection brought to his mind his parents, as with all the kindness of fond affection they had joined in his sports, or delightfully impressed on his mind the lessons of morality and religion sug-

gested by passing objects.—"Through yonder shady lane," thought he, "how often have I walked with my dear and only sister, imagining myself her protector! How often have I rambled here with my beloved Anna, and endeavoured by every means in my power to gain her heart—and now, how am I leaving her?—desolate and unhappy!"

He could bear these reflections no longer. Spurring his horse, he determined to indulge no more in feelings which, in spite of himself, unmanned him.

It is not my intention to follow Sir Nicolas Leak through every stage of his journey, nor is it necessary to my tale that I should do so. Suffice it to say, that long before he reached London, all gloomy forebodings had passed away, and he burned to distinguish himself as much in the battle-field as he had previously gained honour at all public tournaments and in council. He was indeed a singular instance of a young, brave, and noble man, whom education and nature had alike gifted for the field or the cabinet, the splendour of a court, or the happy retirement of home. He was a general favourite. The old esteemed him, and pointed him out as a pattern

to the young nobility; and the young themselves forgot his superiority in the constant good-humour, cheerfulness, and interest, which he displayed towards them.

The brave Prince Edward received him on his arrival, as he always did, with marked favour, and immediately placed him about his person. And the king, when they approached to take their leave, told him, with a smile, that he trusted prudence was mingled with his valour; and that whenever his son's well-known courage (he would not call it rashness) might lead him into danger, he would be at hand to save England's future monarch. "My only fear," continued the king, "is from stratagem. In open war the noble Edward never can be foiled. But, unsuspecting and generous himself, he will be more open to the designs of the wily. In you I can confide. Promise me, then, that you will ever be at hand, in peace, I mean, more especially than in war, to guard your prince."

"It will be alike my duty and my happiness, sire," replied Sir Nicolas; "and never, I trust, shall I be absent in the time of need."

With buoyant spirits and undaunted hearts the troops embarked for Tunis, where they

were to join the King of France and a large army. But owing to the death of the good King Lewis, who there fell a victim to the plague, the French army immediately returned home, and the prince found, that if he proceeded in his enterprise, he must trust entirely to his own valour and resources. To return to England just at the outset of the expedition was not to be borne, and with the full approbation of all his officers and troops, he sailed immediately for Palestine. The voyage was short and prosperous. Time flew on joyous wings, and hope painted victory in anticipation.

Nor were the charms of beauty wanting to increase their happiness. The lovely and affectionate Eleanora would not allow Edward to depart on such a hazardous enterprise alone; and in her train some of England's fairest flowers were seen. She herself dreamed not of danger — knew not fear. Frank and confiding, gay without levity, modest without reserve, and, above all, devotedly attached to her husband, she gave herself, and every minor feeling, entirely up to promote his happiness. She felt not fatigue, owned not illness, but ever called

around her the jocund song or cheerful dance, the sprightly conversation or animating wit—and the glance of pleasure from his dark eye, his pressure of her hand, or his animated smile which greeted her presence, at once repaid her for all the privations she suffered or might have feared. No time passes more swiftly than that spent in happiness; so it was now, and all saw with surprise the rocks of Palestine rise on their sight, and the ships brought to anchor on her coasts. All, said I? No, one there was, who panted to signalize himself in arms, and, having rescued Jerusalem from the infidels, to return to the arms of his beloved, to the peaceful shades of his own dear country. These were his day-dreams. He perhaps alone, in all that gallant assemblage of young and brave and beautiful, had chided the time that went too slowly. But now whose countenance is more bright with pleasure, whose arm more eager for conquest? Edward marked his ardour with delight and loved him the better that the same flame burned so brightly in either breast. He had seen with regret the gloom which at times had clouded his favourite's brow, and though he had truly attributed it to a parting with a

young and lovely bride, constantly recalled to his mind by the scenes around him, yet now, the love of glory had displaced for the time all regret, and the change was most gratifying to the observing eye of his prince and friend.

Justly has it been said by one of our historians that Prince Edward remained in the Holy Land to gather empty honours and encounter real dangers; so also was it with his friends and followers. The small but brave army of England was a source of never-ending astonishment to the numerous hordes of infidels. Actuated by one spirit, that of valour founded on and stimulated by religion, they were invincible. Nothing impeded their progress; and before a year had elapsed they found themselves closely besieging the city of Jerusalem, while the inhabitants trembled at their situation; the more so, as their governor, the proud and fiery Haroun Murah, loaded the English army with the most bitter menaces.

This was the posture of affairs, when one day a Saracen, bearing a white flag and escorted by a party, appeared before the camp and requested speech with the Prince.

He was immediately conducted to his tent, where he was then in deep consultation with his principal generals. Sir Nicolas Leak was at the moment speaking to him in an animated manner.

"Would," he said "that your Highness would to-morrow command the assault! So long a period has elapsed since our last victory, that our swords are well nigh rusting in their scabbards." And as he spoke he half drew his falchion forth. The Prince smiled at his eagerness, and turned to address the herald, for such he feigned to be. The Prince started and recoiled as if a serpent had crossed his path, as his eye met that of the Saracen, which though almost lost beneath his shaggy eyebrow, gleamed with deadly hatred, and it semeed to him, despair.

"Back, back, slave!" he exclaimed, nor dare so near profane my presence."

"My errand is to you alone, proud Prince," returned the Saracen, and hastily darting onwards he aimed a blow at Edward's unguarded breast with a dagger, which he drew from the folds of his vest. But, happily for England, Sir Nicolas Leak had been equally rapid with the infidel; his sword had caught the

dagger and turned it from its course, so that it only wounded the Prince's arm, and in another minute it was through the body of the wretch who had thus outraged all the laws of honour. Edward rose hastily, exclaiming, "Look not so pale, brave Sir Nicolas—'tis but a scratch; to you I owe my life." He was here interrupted by a horrid laugh from his prostrate foe, whose hideous countenance was distorted by death and revenge.

"Fools," he said, "think you I placed myself thoughtlessly in the lion's den? a true follower of the Prophet knows the value of his life too well."

"What mean you?" said Sir Nicolas with a degree of alarm he could not quite conceal.

"I mean," he returned, speaking with difficulty, "that I have my revenge. My life is dearly bought; my blows never want repeating. My memory will be immortalized in my country, for Edward of England is my victim, his soldiers will be Haroun Murah's." He stopped in the agonies of death, but a satanic expression again lighted up his face, and laughing faintly, and muttering "Poison, poison!" he expired.

It is impossible to paint the mute consternation which followed the scene I have just described. Edward was the first to recover himself.

"My friends," he said "this man may be a liar as well as villain; let the surgeon be fetched. I do not fear death—but guard the camp well—be careful of a surprise. If it be possible, conceal my danger, or, if it must be so, my death; and let not his words be true—let not my gallant army fall victims also!"

The surgeons soon arrived. The moment they beheld the wound their looks told the fatal truth.

"I see how it is," said the noble Prince; "let me see my dear wife. Sir Nicolas, you shall soon receive my orders. Now assist me to my inmost tent—but look not so miserable, man, you'll frighten my Eleanora."

Sir Nicolas and his other attendants obeyed, and he was soon disengaged from the more cumbrous parts of his dress, and reclining on his bed, with his gentle wife kneeling at his side.

"My life!" she said affectionately, "you look very pale. And why do they not dress

your arm? Surely the loss of blood will weaken you—let it be done quickly." She turned towards the principal surgeon as she spoke, and his countenance struck her with affright. She glanced her eyes around; the same expression was on every face, and Sir Nicolas Leak, on whom her eye last rested, looked deadly pale, and horror-struck. "What can this mean?" she said, shuddering as she spoke; "merely a flesh wound in the arm cannot surely cause all this horror. Speak Edward, this suspense is agony—are you wounded elsewhere?"

The Prince gazed at her for a moment with a melancholy look; his lips quivered as he offered to speak to her: she rose, and putting one arm round him said,

"Fear not for me, I am stronger than you think." She smiled as she spoke.

"My love," he said gently, and he parted her hair from her forehead and gazed on her with the utmost tenderness, "you must indeed, I fear, exert yourself. It would be useless to dress this wound, the dagger was —was——"

"O God!" she said starting convulsively, "say not it was poisoned." No one

answered her, but her husband, throwing his unhurt arm around her, pressed her soothingly towards him. For a moment she returned his embrace, then disengaging herself she turned hastily round.

"What," she said, "is there no hope? is there no way of withdrawing the poison from this wound?—speak, speak—can ye not save his life?"

"There is but one way, madam," replied the surgeon, in a low and hesitating tone.

"What! Is there even a possibility, and do you stand there without attempting it? What can this mean?"

"What indeed?" said Sir Nicolas Leak, in astonishment: the Prince also raised an inquiring eye.

"It means," continued the surgeon "that whoever wishes to preserve his highness's life, will most probably lose his own in the attempt."

"Tell me but how," eagerly asked Sir Nicolas.

"The only possible chance for the Prince," said the surgeon, "is to have the poison sucked from the wound."

Sir Nicolas replied only by darting hastily

forward; in one moment he was on his knees by the bedside, and was about to apply his lips to the wound, when the Princess Eleanora prevented him.

"My good Sir Nicolas," she said, "stop; listen one moment to me; my life is bound up in my husband's; if he die I cannot live; let the same deed then cause the death of both;" and she pressed forward eagerly towards his arm.

"My love," said the Prince, "I cannot, indeed I cannot allow you thus to risk your precious life." She smiled sweetly on him.

"In no other instance, dearest Edward," said she, "will I disobey you, but you must not, shall not deny me the delight, the privilege of restoring you to health. Clear the tent," she added "and let no one remain except the necessary attendants. Sir Nicolas, to your duty."

"Alas!" he said sadly, "I never found it so difficult to know my duty." The Princess smiled.

"It is not here, believe me," she replied; "speak, Edward, you see my orders are not obeyed."

Sir Nicolas, overcome by emotion, bowed

low to her, kissed his Prince's hand, and praying to God to bless her highness's endeavour and devotion, hastily left the tent. Meantime the devoted wife kissed her husband's pale cheek, and sitting down applied her lips to his arm; nor did she relax in the work she had thus undertaken, until the noble Edward sunk into a deep sleep. The surgeon told her that all danger was over. Letting her head fall gently on the bed, with her lips now pressed on his hand, she wept long and quietly, and at last she also slumbered by her much loved lord.

CHAPTER III.

THE sleep of England's valiant Prince was long and refreshing. The sounds of war which thickened around him served but to soothe his warlike spirit; and in his dreams he was even now chasing the Saracen from the field, unconscious how much his presence was really needed there to assure his soldiers, who heard rumours of his wound. Sir Nicolas Leak and the other officers of the Prince had found their presence indeed necessary. When they left his tent, it was soon evident that troops were issuing from Jerusalem, although a slow, drizzling rain, which was falling, concealed their numbers and strength at present from the English. Every necessary precaution was taken, and instead of accomplishing a surprise as they ex-

pected, the infidels met with so fierce an attack as to drive them back to the walls of their city. Fresh reinforcements, however, kept rushing out; rank after rank was cut down merely to be replaced by others; and the English slowly retired to guard their camp, which a part of the enemy were endeavouring to surround, when suddenly the cry for their Prince became more general. A common panic seemed to have struck the soldiers, and all the valour and intrepidity of the officers were required to prevent an actual flight. It appeared that this horror arose from the cries of the infidels that Edward was dead; and their spirits rose in proportion to the alarm of their foes. It was evident that his presence alone could reassure his army, or change the fortune of the day. Messengers were dispatched to inform him of the necessity of his presence, if he could possibly appear. The Princess Eleanora had long been listening in fearful anxiety to the sounds around, but the Prince started from his sleep at the first movement within his tent, and grasped a sword which lay within his reach; scarcely hearing the words addressed to him, but impelled, as well

by his dream as by the din of the war raging around him. Hastily throwing a loose mantle upon him he waited not for his armour. His buckler alone was slung from his shoulder. Deaf to the entreaties of his wife, he sprang on his charger and galloped to the spot on which the battle raged the thickest. Never was a more heroic form beheld than that of the gallant Edward. Unhelmeted—his dark brown locks waving in the air—his eyes flashing fire—the flush of sleep and valour on his dark cheek—the proud curl of his resentful lip roused by the assassin's villainy—the majestic daring of his whole youthful form—the naked sword glittering in his hand so vividly and quickly, that it seemed scarcely wielded by a child of earth,—altogether formed an object which arrested all eyes. The shout of joy, the hurra of anticipated triumph, burst instantaneously from the whole English army. The cry of "Edward and Victory!" was the only sound now heard. Both parties paused to gaze on the hero, and when the fight again commenced, it was evident who would be invincible. In vain did Haroun Murah rally his army. In vain, with the fiercest courage, did he urge his followers, by entreaties

and threats, to return to their duty. In vain did he himself fight with the utmost fury. He could not succeed. Edward was no longer in their eyes a man, or if he were, his life was charmed, or how could he have escaped the poisoned wound? how dared he thus, unarmed, encounter hosts?

"Fools! dogs!" exclaimed their commander, "my life then, or, if it please Alla, his, shall pay the forfeit of your contemptible cowardice." And as he spoke he urged his courser onwards. At the moment a javelin from another hand pierced the breast of Edward's horse, and forced him at once to leave the animal; but at the same instant another was by his side, and Sir Nicolas Leak with his bridle in one hand, and offering his helmet with the other, entreated the Prince to mount, and pointed to his approaching antagonist.

"Take care of yourself then my brave friend," said he, as he unhesitatingly accepted his offers, "for Haroun Murah will require an armed head and ready hand;" and as he spoke, he rushed to meet him.

For a time all near watched the movements of these two mighty warriors, and Sir Nicolas forgot, in the intenseness with which he was

gazing on his Prince, his own dangerous situation, till he was roused by a voice near him calling on him to defend himself. He obeyed, and at once saw all his danger; but bravely did he play his part in this unequal combat. Once he raised his hand to sacrifice the horse on which his opponent rode, but he restrained himself; and avoiding returning the blows aimed at him, he endeavoured to make the animal unmanageable by cutting the bridle. He at length succeeded, though not without wounding the horse, who threw his rider. Sir Nicolas stood by immoveable until the Turk had risen from the ground. The combat was not long; blows rained on either side, and Sir Nicolas's unarmed head was drenched in blood. He felt exhausted, but his last thrust was successful, and the infidel fell to the ground in his death swoon. Others rushed on, and Sir Nicolas Leak received a wound in his side, which threw him prostrate by his late foe; and the pain of the wound was succeeded by a faintness which allowed him only time to hear the voice of Haroun Murah, speaking in a feeble tone, " Save his life and bear him within the walls a prisoner." At the same time the drums of England beat a re-

treat. "The fight is over for to-day," thought he, "and, thank God, Edward is victorious!" He pressed his crucifix and wife's ring to his bosom, and fainted.

Meantime Prince Edward's encounter with the Saracen commander had completed the combat for the day. Both fought well and bravely, and once they stopped and gazed with looks of admiration on each other. "Noble Prince!" said Haroun Murah, "you have been basely attacked by a dog whom I am obliged to call a Saracen; but do me the justice to believe that until his followers returned to the city I knew not of his design."

"I believe it," returned Edward; "one who can fight like the gallant warrior before me would never descend to such dark deeds, to such infamous tools." A gleam of pleasure flushed the infidel's dark brow.

"Why," he said, "may we not clasp the friendly hand instead of dealing death and destruction around? Generous Christian, cannot this be?"

"We fight for the city, the sepulchre of our God!" said the Prince.

"And we will maintain our rights," returned the infidel. Again they fought—but not so

earnestly as before; the war raging around separated them more than once, and in the last of these separations Haroun Murah perceived that he was almost deserted by his own army. At the same moment his eye caught the falling body of Sir Nicolas Leak, with whom he was well acquainted as an intimate friend and favourite of Edward. He felt that fortune had befriended him: and desiring his followers to take care of the prisoner, he retreated to the city just as Edward called off his soldiers from an attack, in which the gloom of approaching night rendered it impossible to persist.

In the battle of this day the English army lost several brave commanders, and more of their men, than at any other period: and although thousands of infidels lay on the ground, for their hundreds, the general feeling was one of sorrow and foreboding. The Prince himself felt that many such victories would thin too much their already exhausted ranks. He for the first time despaired of achieving, by his own resources, the grand object of his enterprise. As he slowly paced his tent, he thought upon the terms which he might best make if obliged to return to England. Already in the

possession of several cities, he felt that he had the advantage in his hands; but he sighed at the idea of giving up this advantage, without having completed his work, and having made himself master of Jerusalem. Dispatches from England were also at this moment put into his hands, and as he hastily perused them, he saw with a glance that his presence was necessary there. His father was ill, it was feared dying, and he had enemies in England. "Yes," he said as he rose, and with a heavy step continued his walk, "I will return to close my father's eyes, to take possession of my kingdom; to-morrow Haroun Murah shall listen to such terms as I shall propose, and I will leave no more of my brave followers in Palestine. Where is Sir Nicolas Leak?" asked he aloud; "it is long since I required his presence. I need his buoyant spirits," thought he, "to take this heavy weight from my mind." But Sir Nicolas came not, and Prince Edward, irritated, impatient, and half alarmed, inquired the reason. He was not to be found. None of his own train had seen him since the battle ceased, and all were now employed searching for his body, as it was feared that he had fallen. Edward heard this intelligence

with horror, and gave orders that the strictest search should be made.

"He is not, cannot be dead!" he exclaimed; "and I will shake your city to its foundation ere I resign him." Search was made for him, and by the time the sun rose high in the heavens, every Englishman was laid in his lowly grave, but he was not amongst them. He must be a prisoner then, and an exchange was immediately proposed, or any ransom offered. The governor of Jerusalem acknowledged that he believed he had been taken within the city walls, and by his orders, but where or by whom he knew not. In the hurry of the night he had thought not of him, believing him to be safe, but now he was not to be found. All Haroun Murah knew was this, that the Saracen to whom he had given the order was one of rank, that his name was Mohammed, and that at that time his only brother was lying dead from the blows of Sir Nicolas: but that this Saracen declared that he had not heeded the orders of his commander, for that he would not savet he life of a Christian dog, who had just destroyed his brother. He had left him there to die, he said, and knew no more. Haroun Murah con-

cluded by expressing his regret, and promising to make every possible inquiry after the young knight, who, he feared, was no longer living. Edward received this intelligence with the greatest anger as well as grief, and accused Haroun Murah himself of treachery and baseness. He declared that he would sacrifice the whole of Jerusalem to his friend, whom, living or dead, he would once more behold. As soon as his army had recovered from their fatigue, he led them again to the attack. Still more closely did they besiege the city, and though the Saracens fought valiantly and made many sorties, it was evident that famine would at length force them to yield. Week after week, month after month, however, passed away, and no tidings were heard of Sir Nicolas Leak. At length Edward himself believed that the words of the governor were true, and that he had indeed fallen a victim to revenge. His own army grew daily less—his feelings became less sanguine. In a short time afterwards he heard of the death of the King of England, and about the same time his own young son fell a victim to the climate. He then determined to leave the scene where, though he had gained many laurels, he had

suffered many heart-aches. His answer to the question, why he regretted his father's death so much more than his son's, deserves to be remembered.

"I may," he said, "have many sons, but I can never have another father." That he was about to be seated on the throne of England by the unanimous voice of his subjects, could then yield him no pleasure. Ambition and glory, the idols to whom he bowed, were at that time overwhelmed by his feelings. And ere we quit him for ever, we cannot but pause to venerate those holy affections, which rendered him one of the most dutiful sons, and faithful husbands, that ever wielded the British sceptre; affections which shed a lustre on his memory infinitely more bright than was conferred by the glorious valour, which made Wales an English principality, and the Scottish kings bow to his power.

The next day articles of capitulation were entered into and speedily completed, as honorable and advantageous for the English, as under their present circumstances desirable for the Saracens. In another month Edward the First left Palestine for ever, and proceeded to Italy and France, ere he returned to his

own kingdom, that he might there partake in the chivalric amusements of the times, renovate his health and spirits, and enjoy the honours which budded so freshly on his brow.

CHAPTER IV.

THE day on which Sir Nicolas Leak left his wife in solitude and sorrow, was the first of a new era in her life. From that moment even her appearance altered, and the youthful, laughing girl (for she was not yet eighteen) gradually became the reflecting, serious, matronly woman. She had risen hastily from her bed as her husband left the house—for the last soft kiss he had pressed on her sleeping cheek had been unfelt—and she now gazed from the window till no trace remained of him she loved. A deep weight pressed upon her heart: the fear of the future, more than regret at present separation, appalled her, and throwing herself on the bed she fainted. She soon revived, and tears relieved her; she remembered, too, her husband's words, and for the

first time feeling deeply her need of support, she prayed fervently for it; she had been accustomed to rise rather late — but now she could not sleep; and when her attendant entered her room she found her almost dressed.

"Alice," she said, "give me that simple white dress, which Sir Nicolas admired so much: and clasp that golden circlet around my waist—he always said it matched my hair so well: nay, child, touch not my hair, these braids best become a bride, perhaps, for ever widowed." She shuddered as she spoke.

"My dear, dear lady! think not, speak not thus," said Alice: Lady Leak smiled through her tears to reassure her maid, and continued—

"Till he returns I will wear no other style of dress. For him alone, ever since the first dawn of youth, I have adorned myself: and now—I will think of dress no longer. Vanity shall have no place in that heart where love has hitherto held universal sway; for I have heard and read, that vanity is the sovereign who rules at will all women's hearts. It shall not be so with me, so help me God!—There, Alice, that will do—quite tight enough." And

as she spoke, her own figure struck her view. Her pale cheeks glowed with the brightest carnation. The flush that mounted there was one of happiness; and murmuring in so low a tone that her maid could not catch her words, "His child to love and watch," she covered her face with one hand, and remained a while in pleasing thought. When she withdrew her hand, Alice thought she had never seen her mistress look more lovely. But though she looked so happy and so beautiful, it was not her usual style of beauty, nor ever again did it visit her face. Even now there was a look of reflection which clouded the arch of her open brow, and dimmed the dimple of her smiling mouth: but it gave in interest what it took away of gaiety. Until this day she had scarcely seemed to think. Like the butterfly, she had sported under the sunshine of heaven, delighting every beholder; a perfect Thalia, her step was light, elastic; her voice was sweet and rich, her countenance was fair, open, and smiling, through sunny curls, which sometimes almost concealed it from view. When in a playful mood, (and when were her moods otherwise than playful?) she would shake them over those bright eyes and almost

hide them in their luxuriance; for until this day her hair had generally been allowed to fall in long, natural, and graceful curls upon her shoulders. Now, fastened up, with a golden comb, and falling in large bright curls, they added much to the striking elegance of her figure.

Alice continued her observation till Lady Leak turned her humid eye upon her. "You may leave me," she said "and put some sweetbriar on the breakfast table" — she spoke in a low and sweet, though mournful tone—"and I must breakfast alone." She then opened her husband's dressing-room door, and entered. In one part of it was raised a cross, beneath which he always knelt: and on a small table near were several religious books, which he had promised to leave for her, and had latterly been marking on her account. She threw herself on her knees, and with tears she prayed that she might be enabled to maintain those good resolutions which she had this morning made—"not unreasonably to lament his absence—to improve herself in every solid acquirement — as well that she might agreeably surprise her husband, as be enabled to perform her duty to her child." Here al-

ways she determined that her morning devotions should be paid, and in her own thoughts she consecrated that small room to God and goodness. "No other thought shall here enter my mind," she exclaimed; "when I am weak, foolish or sinful, let it be elsewhere; but here may I be strengthened and sanctified!" When she left her room, her step was slower and more measured than it had ever before been seen. Her thoughts were full of high resolves, but her manner was calm and composed.

Lady Leak had been expecting, for the last few days, her husband's sister, Lady Dacre. She was a widow with an only child, then four years old, and the young Arthur, Lord Dacre, was a great favourite of his aunt's. But they had not arrived, and she sat expecting them, when a letter was put into her hand and she read these few and hurried lines:—

"DEAREST ANNA,

"In hopes of reaching you before this, I have hesitated to say that it was possible I might not be able—hesitated to tell you that my dear Arthur was drooping; but to day he is much worse, and my physician tells me that

even if his attack be not so serious as he apprehends, it will be impossible for him to leave home for some time. I have regretted much not seeing my brother before his departure; I regret also I cannot hasten to comfort my own dear little sister; but I trust that she will exert herself, and, for the sake of us all, strive to be well and happy. Arthur sends a kiss to his dear aunt. May God restore him to health, and in his own good time our Nicolas to our arms! Bless thee, dear Anna, prays

"Thy affectionate sister,

"MARY DACRE."

A few tears fell as Lady Leak perused this letter; it was indeed a severe disappointment to her not to see her friend, as well as a source of grief to hear of the illness of her young nephew; but she would not give way to her feelings. She put on a light straw hat, and proceeded to the house of father Jerome, who was just recovering from a long illness. She tapped at his parlour door, and surprised him by her appearance. "Dear daughter," he said, blessing her, "I scarcely dared to hope

for this exertion—so soon too—but your usual benevolence never sleeps."

"Father," she returned, "do not praise me too much. A little selfishness has, perhaps, caused me at present to exert myself. You, I know, will aid me in all my good resolves, and though I knew you were better, to *see* you so always gives me the greatest pleasure. Will you taste these grapes?" The good old man took some, and then entered into conversation with her, and when she left the cottage, she felt, as she had anticipated, comforted and strengthened. She spent this day with much more composure than she had dared to expect; another and another passed away, and she remained the same active, resigned, almost cheerful being. Lady Leak had never until now known what it was to trust to herself, or lean on her own powers. A petted orphan ward of Lord and Lady Leak, and at a very early age the betrothed of their son, she had been nourished amidst love and caresses, and like the twining ivy had gathered support from those around her. She had almost feared to stand alone: and though the void in her heart was indeed deeply felt, she

was pleased to find that she had strength to follow the rules which her husband had laid down for her.

Two months passed away before Lady Dacre durst bring her son to Sutton. He was then slowly recovering from a violent attack of fever, and his delicate appearance gave his mother much anxiety. Change of air, however, soon had a beneficial effect, and the child became as lively and amusing as ever. Time now passed swiftly on, winter succeeded to autumn, and Lady Leak became the mother of twins—a boy and girl, who were immediately christened Nicolas and Mary. Now gazing on her children, how did she long to show them to their father! How eagerly did she wait for intelligence from him, and listen with delight to the rumour of Edward's return! Her time was fully occupied: her anticipations were all happiness, and it was seldom that a doubt of the return of Sir Nicolas crossed her mind. Her children had become able to walk, and were beginning to amuse her with their innocent prattle, when she received a shock from which she could scarcely recover. The army was returning, and a letter from Edward himself, written in the most gracious and consol-

ing manner, told her of her loss. For a time she sunk beneath the blow. A violent illness succeeded the first announcement of this intelligence; and her recovery was so slow and lingering, that Lady Dacre feared that she would fall into a decline; she would sit for hours silent and motionless, gazing on her children, and she would shudder and start when spoken to, as if awakened from a fearful dream. Vain were all arguments, all consolations; she could not rouse herself, but a dangerous illness of the children had the best effect in restoring her to composure. They were all attacked violently by the scarlet fever, and their lives, particularly that of the little Mary, were in imminent danger. She would never leave her mother; her arms were constantly round her; her drooping head on her bosom; and that mother, as she hung over her almost dying child, felt that she had yet much to lose—but, if her child was spared, much to live for.

The little girl revived, and the lesson, though painful, was salutary. Lady Leak gradually returned to her former habits, and took an interest in her former pleasures. The pensive smile of chastened happiness

again dwelt on her countenance, and her eye beamed with cheerful resignation. At times a sparkle of delight even threw its sunshine over her face, and mantled in the deepest glows on her faded cheek.

"Dear Anne," said her sister one day, "tell me why at this moment you look so very happy?"

Lady Leak sighed; "I cannot expect you, or perhaps any one but myself," she said, "to believe in my day-dreams, but at times, I not only think, but feel convinced, that my beloved husband still lives, and will be restored to me. You remember the ring; I know he would have contrived to have sent me the other half."

"You forget how impossible that would be, surrounded as he was by foes," answered Lady Dacre; "I do not wish to bring that shade again over your countenance, but indeed I cannot indulge in the least hope."

"I know you cannot," replied Lady Leak composedly, "nor any one but myself; but I well remember almost the last words he addressed to me. He told me always to nourish hope, and to believe that he would return, however improbable it might appear: do you wonder, Mary, if I obey him?"

"I certainly do not," said Lady Dacre, "but I fear for the disappointment you will some day have to endure."

"My dear sister, say not a disappointment," said Lady Leak; "I shall never, while I live, be without a *little* hope; and at times my hope is so strong and vivid that it makes me blessed indeed; in the mean time, it is to me as nourishment. The very bread I eat, does not strengthen and refresh me so much. How delighted will he be with our dear babes!" and again she gave herself up to delightful anticipations.

Lady Dacre sighed as she looked at her, for she felt that it was almost impossible that her brother could still live. Year after year passed on, and still Lady Leak remained the same in hopes and feelings. She had never worn mourning for her husband; she was persuaded that he lived, and would at some time return. Her children were her constant care; and she had now for some time entered again into society. Many months every year she and Lady Dacre spent together, and together they presided over the instruction of their children. Father Jerome alone taught them religious truths,

for in them he would not allow his children to have any other instructor. Seated on his knee, with one arm round his neck, Mary would sit for hours listening to the mild old man; or, occasionally stroking his silver locks and furrowed brow, she would sing to him with the sweetest voice, some childish song. She was the pet of the family, and the exact image of what her mother had been, except that at times that mother's sorrows gave a shade of pensiveness to her youthful face. Shall I anticipate my reader, when I say that the young Arthur Dacre loved his cousin with an all engrossing passion? In all their childish sports he was the protector of the twins, but as Nicolas grew bolder and more manly, he too would take care of his little sister. Mary herself knew not which brother she loved the best. Now, however, Lord Dacre felt that he loved his cousin with more than a brother's affection. He was just eighteen, and all that a mother's fondest wishes would behold. A slight sketch of his conduct at this time may give interest.

Mary had long thought him rather changed; could it be that he was becoming irritable or ill humoured? O no; he showed

it to her alone; and it must be that for some unknown cause he had ceased to love her. This thought made her unhappy, and she was determined to do all in her power to please him; for him she would sing her sweetest songs—she would dance for him—fly for what he wanted; if he seemed irritable, she would strive to soothe him; but all was in vain. He often left the room abruptly while she was singing, and even once or twice, when she had, on going to bed, offered her usual kiss, half turned from her; and then, as if recollecting himself, bade her good-night and kissed her with an averted eye. One night he had been more than usually silent, and Mary thought that he disliked her more than ever. She cried herself to sleep, and wondered why he did not love her. "I am the same," she thought; "I think even kinder than I was; Nicolas, I am sure, loves me better, and says I am the best girl in the world, and now I never have those childish whims I had, which Arthur used to laugh at, although he would correct them. What can be the reason? Perhaps I am ugly: to be sure I am growing tall and rather awkward; at least mamma says so, laugh-

ingly, sometimes, but I thought she joked; still he would not love me less; and he says too that I am like mamma, and she was beautiful: but that cannot be the cause. He sees many young ladies, and perhaps I am so much inferior to them that he cannot like me. But that is not my fault. And Arthur is of so generous a disposition too; I will speak to him; I cannot bear that he should treat me as he does. Perhaps no one but myself may see the difference, but I feel it; so very different from my own, always kind and affectionate, brother." She soon slept, for the tears of childhood are quickly dried, and when in the morning her cousin met her in his former frank manner, she thought no longer of her intention—for he could not look on her thus, with those soft brown eyes, if, as she had fancied, he disliked her. A short time passed, and again Mary was annoyed at his changed manner, and like him she also changed—grew shy, reserved, and no longer tried to please him. She was not happy; her feelings were hurt, and what little pride she had was mortified. Her mother perceived the change, and when with tears she acknowledged that she believed her

cousin did not love her, and that that made her unhappy, her mother assured her she was wrong; but that now Arthur was a man, she must not expect him to show so much attention to her.

"O yes, mamma, perhaps that is it," said poor Mary; "I never thought of that before; I do not mind if he loves me still, and you know I am growing very fast and old." Lady Leak kissed her daughter's innocent lips and blessed her, and bade her go and find her cousin, and not be such a little simpleton. Mary willingly obeyed, and quickly ran over the grounds, until she saw him on a garden seat at some distance: his back was towards her, and he did not hear her light step, till she placed her hand on his shoulder, and affectionately kissed his cheek. He started, and as he turned to her, the deepest crimson mounted even to his temples. He said he had not expected her.

"And well might you not," returned she, laughing, "for lately I have been a very silly girl, and scarcely spoken to you; but now I will sit down and tell you all. Do you know, Arthur, I fancied you did not love me?"

"That indeed was a very foolish fancy," said he.

"So mamma says," rejoined Mary. "Well at first I tried to bring your love back again, but all was in vain; you seemed, I thought, quite to dislike me, and I grew unhappy and perhaps a little cross, and I thought I would not care for you;—but that I cannot do, dear Arthur," and she pressed his hand in both hers, "for I always must love you."

"Very well, Mary," said Arthur kindly; "recollect *I* tell you too that you always must." And he looked fondly on her, and put his arm round her. "I would not have my little cousin forget me."

"Forget you indeed," said she, gaily; "but I have not finished my story; I went to mamma and told her what I thought, and she has explained everything to me."

"Explained everything?" said he, hastily.

"Yes, she says it is because you are a man, and are not likely to find pleasure in the company of such a child as I am. But she says that you do love me as well as ever; and she sent me to find you, and I dare say she thought I should tell you; for mamma always thinks it best, if there be any misunderstanding, to explain it directly; and now tell me truly, Arthur, is mamma right?"

"Both right and wrong," said he with a smile; "it is not, Mary, that I cannot find pleasure in your society, for I always do feel the very greatest; but I know you will forgive me if I am at times irritable and impatient."

"If you love me, Arthur, as well as Nicolas does, I will forgive you anything. Sometimes I thought perhaps you did not like me to kiss you or take hold of your hand, now I am getting older. And perhaps you thought me forward or bold; but I don't know how that could be with you, who have always been my brother."

"No, no, dearest!" he said quickly, "I never had such a thought: I know my own innocent, simple, Mary too well for that."

"And yet, Arthur, you never kissed me, or took my hand, but turned away from me, until now—except by fits and starts. But we will think no more of it—as you do love me, I am happy again." And as she spoke she turned her smiling face and sparkling eyes to him. With an emotion which he could not control, he pressed her closely to his bosom, and kissed several times the rosy lips which were not turned away, but re-

turned his kisses with all the fond unconsciousness of early youth. It must be owned that Mary felt somewhat surprised at the suddenness of his embrace; she was still more so when he released her, and, turning away, leaned his head on his hand. For a time she gazed on him in silence; at length she said gently, "You are not well, Arthur, I am sure, or you would not be thus strange."

"You are right, dear girl," said he, turning towards her a face paler than she had ever before seen it; "I often am not quite well, but I think—I think—I must try change of air, to restore my usual health."

"O yes, do anything to get quite well again. I am sorry that Sutton does not suit you; but have you ever had any physician? you must indeed take care of yourself. What should we do without you?" and her eyes were filled with tears.

"I am not ill," said her cousin, "and yet I think a little change would do me good—but remember, Mary, however strange I may appear, I love you—I shall love you to the day of my death, more tenderly, more ardently than you can imagine."

She shook her head almost incredulously. "I will not argue the case with you," he continued; "but will you promise to love me as dearly in return?"

"Will I!" said she, delightedly, "I think so indeed, most truly."

"Thank you, dearest Mary; and now we will seal this promise with a kiss, and remember, no more fancies of yours." As he spoke he again kissed her, but there was a seriousness in his manner which impressed her she scarcely knew why, and she felt it the more when a tear fell from his eye on her cheek.

"Arthur," she said with emotion, "what ails you?"

"Foolish child," he returned with a melancholy smile, "are these not tears of happiness? Now leave me, dear one; I will soon rejoin you.

With a slow step, though happy heart, Mary obeyed, and the young man remained, considering in what manner best to break to his mother and aunt his intention of leaving his home for a time. He determined to tell them the true state of his feelings, for he was convinced that, child as Mary still was, it was

worse than folly to explain his real sentiments to her; and he perceived that if he remained with her, he could not long conceal them from so fond and simple a girl. His mother and aunt listened to him with pleasure, and the latter told him, with a smile, she had but one fault to find, and that was his not waiting a few years longer. But when, in return, he expatiated on the many excellencies of her child, and when she thought of the bright beauty and warm affection of the tall, slim, and strikingly elegant girl, she could no longer be surprised at this early tribute to her charms. She thanked her nephew again and again for the delicacy and propriety of his conduct, evinced in his wish to leave her for the present. It was soon decided that the two cousins should set out on a tour, and visit every place of note in the kingdom. In fact, they were to remain wherever subjects for improvement offered themselves, and mingle the lighter and more pleasing study of nature, with the severer one of science, for their tutors were to accompany them. It was decided that they should remain absent two years, and, to spare pain to all, an early day was fixed for their departure.

Lord Dacre avoided as much as possible being alone with Mary during the few days they remained at Sutton; and during that time, a more experienced observer than she was would have discovered no change in his conduct; he treated her like a beloved sister. As the moment of separation approached, the spirits of the whole party became low, though all strove to repress their feelings. Poor Mary, however, could not help mingling a few tears with her smiles, and when she threw herself into her cousin's arms, she wept aloud. Her brother, kissing her affectionately, told her to cheer up, for that two years would soon be gone. Arthur turned back to have a last look, then flying to her again, caught her to his bosom and whispering, "Do not forget your promise—love me always, dearest," he tore himself away, and, mounting his horse, was soon out of sight.

CHAPTER V.

For some time the party at Sutton felt severely the void in their little circle. But Mary's spirits soon revived, and she exerted herself so much to amuse her aunt and mother, that at length she succeeded. The hearing from, and the writing to, the travellers assisted to restore their spirits, and in watching over their favourite, and seeing her daily improvement in every mental qualification, the two mothers found their happiness. Time passed swiftly on. Mary, though still very young, entered moderately into company, and received from all the tribute of admiration. Lady Leak had more than once been urged to change her name: but the answer she gave to such entreaties, that she was persuaded her husband still lived, and that

no length of time would alter this persuasion; while it condemned the lover, secured the friend. She was still so young, and looked so lovely, that she was occasionally by strangers taken for her daughter, whose simple beauty was spoken of by all. She often spoke of her brothers, and, when she had been introduced to any young man, would say, with a smile, in answer to any question respecting him from her mother and aunt, "O yes, I think him very amiable, agreeable, and handsome; but not like your dear boys. He has not such an expressive eye as our dear Arthur, such a sweet, good-tempered face, nor such buoyant spirits, as our own Nicolas."

The time for their return was now approaching fast; and their letters were full of expressions of delight in the prospect of so soon meeting their friends. Lady Leak and her daughter were now staying at Dacre Castle, where several months in the year were always spent by them, and they almost counted the moments until the arrival of the travellers. Who can paint the rapture with which the mothers each folded a son in her arms, as they gazed on their faces almost at the same instant, to trace a likeness to

their equally beloved and regretted fathers? Nicolas was the first to fly to his sister, and he kissed her again and again, and looked at her with surprise and admiration—so great was the change which two years had made in her. With a swelling heart, Lord Dacre, when he had saluted his aunt, looked on his cousins; he could scarcely control his emotion, but at length approaching them, he said in a low and musical voice, "And has not my sweet sister—or cousin I should say—a welcome also for me?"

In a moment both the hands of the warm-hearted girl were in one of his, his other pressed her to him, as he returned her rapturous kiss; but at the moment he withdrew his arms, and for the first time, as she looked at him, she blushed deeply and exclaimed, "Dear Arthur, how much you are altered!—grown so tall and manly."

He smiled and said, "If you mean to treat me as a stranger, Mary, I can only say, I hope you will remember that is not *my* fault." She gaily held out her hand again.

"I only felt surprised at seeing so great a change; but I shall have enough to do, to

find out all the improvements which you have each gained by your travels."

"And do you think," said Dacre, with a smile," that we shall find no change in you?" as he gazed at her with admiring eyes. The conversation now became general; and never was there a happier party than that seated round the winter fire, at Dacre Castle. Arthur was the least talkative—but certainly not the least happy; Nicolas, on the contrary, was all mirth and frolic—he hovered round his sister, asking her in the same breath twenty questions, or telling his own exploits, or making to his mother and aunt all kind of affectionate inquiries, and reading in their eyes at once answers and approbation. Mary sate with a hand in a hand of each of her brothers, when it suddenly struck her how silent Arthur was, and that he hardly touched her hand, while Nicolas scarcely ever ceased kissing and praising her. She raised her eyes to him; he was gazing on her with a look of such intense tenderness, as seemed to pierce her very heart's core, and he then gently raised her hand to his lips. The vivid blush rose on her cheek, and even mantled her

snowy neck at the moment, as taking her hand away, she withdrew her bashful eyes, and looked at, and spoke to, Nicolas again. From that time, an indistinct consciousness of she knew not what constrained her former intimacy with Arthur; and when that night, on retiring, she as usual bade her friends good-night, she stood before her youthful cousin confused.

"Good-night!" she said, extending her hand and without raising her eyes. Again was that hand pressed to his lips with emotion, and Mary went to sleep to dream of her cousin, and when she awoke to think first of him. She rose, as usual, early, and, as the morning was fine, took a short ramble ere she entered the breakfast-room; Arthur was there alone and checking the feeling which urged her to return, she gaily bade him good morning.

"I see," said he with a smile of pleasure, "you still keep to your early hours; and if I am not mistaken, the rose of exercise, as well as health, is on that cheek;" and as he spoke he gently touched it.

"You are quite right," she said, and not venturing to raise her eyes, "I have had a

very pleasant walk this morning. Only look how beautiful the sun appears, sparkling on that hoar frost." Without attending to her last remark he said, "Why not ask me to walk with you?"

"Oh!" she replied, playfully, "how did I know you would like it? your habits and inclinations may be changed—two years are a long time."

"And have they changed you, Mary?"

"Me, O no! that is, not my heart or feelings: my appearance, I suppose, is changed!"

"You would then still like me as a companion?" asked Arthur.

"To be sure I should, dear Arthur. What a useless question!" and she raised her eyes. Again she blushed. Arthur sighed, and his colour also rose.

"Dearest!" he said, "will you listen to me a few short moments?"

"*Will* I listen!" she replied, "certainly I will; but what can you have to say?" He put his arm round her and sat down on a sofa. Involuntarily she laid her hand on his to remove it from her waist, but he only made that a prisoner also, and her other hand was clasped in his.

"Do you remember your promise to me?" said he.

"Oh! yes I do—to love you always."

"And will you, do you keep it, dearest Mary?"

"Another useless question, Arthur! do you recollect that I then told you I could not help myself, for I must always love you?"

"But tenderly, ardently, as I loved you, Mary, such were your words."

"I know they were," answered Mary.

"Well, Mary, will you not look at me?" She half raised her eyes, then dropped them again.

"You make me feel very foolish, Arthur, and I cannot help myself—why must I look?" and, at length, she again raised them to his face, but met a look which covered her with confusion; and hiding her face on her cousin's shoulder, she remained silent. Closely he pressed her to his bosom as he whispered,

"The love, then, I claim from you, my Mary, is such as my mother felt for her husband. It exceeds all other love. Speak—tell me, will you be my own dear wife and comforter?"

For a time Mary could not speak, when

she did she said, "You had better ask my mother," was the answer faltered forth by Mary.

"I have already my dear aunt's approbation; your's alone is wanting to make me blest indeed."

"And can that be wanting, my own Arthur? Know you so little of my heart? True it is, I knew not how I loved you; but you must be sure, that to make you happy would make me so too—O! too too happy!"

When Lady Leak entered the breakfast-room she found the two cousins still there, Arthur with such a face of open happiness as would have told at once his secret, had he not caught her hand and begged her blessing on her children. Lady Leak blessed them with tears, though she asked Arthur if he were not rather too hasty.

"Dearest aunt, you know how long I've loved Mary." She smiled acquiescence. What a happy day was this! the mothers gazed with rapture on their children, and hoped for brighter prospects for them than they had experienced, and the young people seemed to walk on air. It was decided that they should not be married until Mary was

seventeen—and until that time nothing of consequence occurred: love and happiness marked each day and hour, and even Lady Leak grew more blooming and cheerful than she had ever been seen since she had received the intelligence of her husband's too probable death.

CHAPTER VI.

We left Sir Nicolas Leak insensible on the field of battle. When he revived, he found himself on a low matted bed in a kind of dungeon. A man was employed in rudely binding up his wounds, the pain of which had brought him to himself. He gazed around him in confusion, and had not decided whether he was dreaming or not, when the man addressed him.

"Ay, ay, you may well wonder where you are. Sure enough you never entered such a place before:" and he held up the lamp to show the prisoner the extent of it; but no eye could penetrate its gloom, and Sir Nicolas shuddered at the dreary obscurity on which the faint rays of the lamp fell.

"What brings me here?" he inquired.

"Are you a prisoner, and ask such a question?" said the man, sullenly.

"And is it thus the governor of Jerusalem treats those captives whom the fate of war throws into his power?"

"You are not his captive," returned the person addressed.

Sir Nicolas started.

"Whose then?"

"Mohammed's."

"And who is this Mohammed, who treats his prisoners thus vilely?"

The man sprang up, as if about to strike Sir Nicolas, but restrained himself.

"I repeat my words. Who treats those vilely, whom all the laws of honour protect? Who throws into a wretched dungeon, a man covered with wounds received in the cause of religion? Tell me, who is this inhuman person whom you call Mohammed?"

"I will answer you this once," muttered he through his almost closed teeth; "but beware—tempt me not too far; I know not to what the injured character of my much-loved lord may urge me. He is a noble Emir, and kind and generous to all. Even you, who lie repining at his inhumanity, have cause to

bless him. He has ordered your life to be preserved, little as you deserve the gift, for, beneath your blows, his only brother fell."

"Why preserve my life to confine me here?" asked Sir Nicolas.

The man hesitated.

"I may as well tell you. Haroun Murah ordered him to take you off the field. He did so, unacquainted with his loss. You were still on the litter on which you had been removed, when one of his soldiers, who had witnessed the combat, informed him that you had slain his brother. 'Let him die, then,' said my master; 'heed him not; life, if indeed there be any remaining, will soon flit out through yon wide wound.' 'Not so, not so, dear father,' said his young and only child; 'pray spare his life. The Christian knew not that he slew my uncle.' She had flown to meet her father on his return. 'My child,' he replied, 'why save his life? never again may he have liberty; the memory of my brother would forbid it.' 'Still, father, save him.' 'Hassan,' he said, and turned to me, 'obey the foolish child; you know the safest place for prisoners such as he.' The young Amine followed me, and

begged me to be careful of you. I have followed the orders of both. I dared only bring you here, and I have made the dungeon as comfortable as I can. On this small table by your side you will find nourishment. I must now leave you, and, in return, speak not evil of my master; his word is law, and he rules our hearts by love."

As he spoke, the attendant left Sir Nicolas to his own reflections, having first trimmed the lamp, which he placed on the table by him. What were those reflections it is useless to relate. Hope rose predominant, and he felt that the chief thing he had to do was to regain his health and strength. He imagined that his wounds were not dangerous, and that loss of blood alone had occasioned his insensibility. He was right;—the vital parts had all escaped injury, and in a few days he was able to leave his bed, and with faltering steps to explore the limits of his present abode. Hassan was kind in his attentions, and alleviated, as much as possible, the horrors of his dungeon.

Just above his bed an iron grating let in light and air; and it soon formed Sir Nicolas' chief amusement to gaze through it, and mark

the change above. Sometimes the sun's brightest rays darted through; at others, a bird would fly across, or, perching on the bars, carol his notes of liberty. Then again, the silver moon would slowly pace along, looking with her cold face beneath the grating, or, partly hidden by a dense cloud, remind him of his own prospects, which, though now like hers, overcast, might one day shine again resplendent. As his strength returned, he spent much time in examining his abode, to see if there were no possible way of extricating himself; for he feared, from what Hassan told him, that there was no hope of his being set at liberty. But vain were his researches. The dungeon walls were deeply sunk in the ground; and, without assistance, he saw that there was no hope. One passage from it, he often followed. It was on the ascent, and ended, like the others, in a thick wall. But still, at times he thought, when the sun shone brightest, a little light might be discerned there. This was his favourite haunt; for here he felt convinced that he was nearest to liberty and happiness. Time moved on more slowly as every day passed over his head, and brought no change.

He might have perceived, had he not been informed of it, that female hands provided for his wants, and culled for him the fairest fruits and flowers, and he often spoke to Hassan about the young Amine.

"Will she not rescue me from this destruction," he one day asked—"take me from this lingering grave?"

"Willingly would she if she could," returned he; "but she is a mere child, and in this instance her father will not listen to her. Often has she begged him to restore you to your country, but in vain. No; there is no change for you. I pity, but cannot aid you."

This conversation sank deep into Sir Nicolas' heart: and from that time his spirits drooped. But when, a few weeks afterwards, Hassan one day abruptly told him that Edward and the army had left Palestine, he fell senseless, and after his recovery appeared so ill, that Hassan, in alarm, ran to inform his young mistress of it; for, like all those who had ever seen much of Sir Nicolas Leak, he had learned to love him;—so mildly, and yet so nobly, had he borne his misfortunes.

When Hassan returned, preceded by the

young Amine, they found him sitting on his bed, lost in thought. His face was buried in his hands, and his whole form drooped. He did not answer or seem to hear when the attendant spoke, but remained immoveable. Deep sighs alone showed that he lived. Amine advanced, and laid her hand on his.

"Christian!" she said, in such a pitying tone that he started, "why are you so sorrowful. True it is, my father will not yet allow you to go home, but perhaps he may relent. At any rate, I will persuade him to take you from this damp, horrid place, which almost frightens me. And then, however sweet your country may be, it cannot equal ours. Your butterflies are not more brightly painted—your birds sing not more sweetly; and as for fruits and flowers you have surely none more beautiful than those I've gathered for you."

When she first spoke, he had raised his eyes, and looked with interest on the most beautiful little creature he had ever beheld. She was about seven years old, tall for her age. Her soft black eyes were wet with tears; her dark hair fell almost to her sandalled feet; the blood rushed through her

transparent though dark complexion, and settled on her cheek, though but for a moment. Her beautiful Grecian mouth disclosed the fairest teeth; and on her strongly marked brow was evidence of a highly-gifted mind, where, even at that early age, serenity and peace were seated. Her dress, too, was singular, and suited to her style of beauty. A silver gossamer, falling in numerous folds from her shoulders, where it was clasped, was twice confined by bands, and reached only below the knee; while the deep, full trowsers, made of the same material, were fastened at her slight ancles with silver buttons. Her arms and throat were bare, and her beautiful hands were now clasped together, as she urged Sir Nicolas to be comforted.

"And who, my little girl," he asked, "has taught you to be thus kind to strangers—to feed the hungry—to compassionate the unfortunate, and to visit the broken-hearted prisoner?"

"My mother," she returned, "my own dear mother, now dead;—about a year, Hassan, is it not? She taught me all that was right and good; I fear me now I shall forget it. She told me, too, to love the Christians;

and I think that I should easily do so, stranger, if they are all like you—so valiant in the field, as Ali said—so resigned in this sad place, and looking so mild and miserable."

She paused an instant, and then continued: "My father, I know, would not have me here—it is beneath my rank. Hassan, is not that why I never came before? But when I heard how ill and wretched you were, I did what my mother would have told me to do, and came to speak of hope. I will release you from this horrid place. Alas! I knew not how horrible it was. My father cannot refuse me; and, now that the English are gone, he will not fear so much. At present, I must go; but rest in peace, and may your dreams be sweet. God bless you!—no, no—Alla, I mean." And, bowing her head with infantine grace, and at the same time with the dignity of rank she had been taught, she left the dungeon.

She left Sir Nicolas indeed comforted, and happier than he had been for months. To leave that place towards which he felt a kind of sickening loathing, would be indeed a happiness, and he thought that once beneath the full blaze of day, a heavy weight would leave

his mind. He might then have a chance of escape, too—of returning to his home, to his wife. The thought was rapture. He imagined he could now again walk a little, but he was mistaken. He had scarcely taken a few steps ere he tottered, and would have fallen, if he had not leaned against the wall. That seemed to totter with him; and he was surprised to feel himself so much weaker than he had thought, when a low, rumbling noise, which he had for some moments heard, terminated in a violent wrench, as it were, of his miserable abode. At the same time, bricks seemed to give way, and to fall with a thundering noise not far from him. He smiled involuntarily at his fancied weakness, as he was immediately aware that an earthquake had occasioned the feeling he had experienced, and thought it very probable that the noise he had heard might have been occasioned by the falling of his prison wall. Hassan, however, had not yet brought him his lamp and supper; and, until he should come, he determined not to attempt to satisfy his curiosity, or see if his conjecture were right or not.

He had not long to wait. When Hassan

came, he gave him an account of the earthquake, which had been, he said, severe, and buried a part of his master's house in ruins.

Sir Nicolas took the opportunity of questioning him respecting Amine's mother, who, he was told, had been a Christian captive, beloved by and loving her master Mohammed. For her sake he had followed Christian customs, and lived with her alone; nor had he yet recovered from the melancholy which her death had caused. That melancholy was only relieved by the presence of his child, who, as Sir Nicolas would perceive, had received from her mother a natural love for Christians, and some recollection of their religion, which, however, was almost effaced by the manner in which her father was educating her, he being a strict believer in the Koran. Hassan concluded the conversation by saying that he doubted not he would soon be released, as Amine's heart was fixed on it, and Mohammed doted on his child.

No sooner had Hassan left him than Sir Nicolas seized the lamp, and hastened to the passage whence the noise proceeded. He found his conjecture right. The wall had

given way, and his heart leaped with delight when he thus saw liberty before him. It would take some time to remove a sufficient portion of the rubbish to enable him to leave the place, and he immediately commenced his work. If he had before fancied himself weak, he was now rejoiced to find how strong he really was. Without the least fatigue, he continued his employment for nearly an hour. When the opening was so large that he might pass through it, he sat down to rest awhile, and at the same time to consider the best plan for concealing himself from those who might endeavour to retake him. True it was he had the promise of release already from the pitying Amine; but if he had more liberty through her intercession, it would be on parole, and still he should be kept in Palestine. Now there was a hope of returning to his home, though much caution, he was aware, would be necessary, the more particularly as he knew not even the situation of his prison. During the evening there had been a constant lightning, which now became much more vivid, and so constant that the usually dark dungeon was altogether illuminated.

With cautious steps he left the place. Who can express his rapture as he stood outside his prison? His first impulse was to throw himself on his knees, and with a grateful heart, pray for a blessing on his further undertakings. When he rose, he saw the hazard of his situation. He was standing within view of part of a large mansion or palace. The bright blaze of light fell full on his altered figure. Hastily he darted towards some trees, and concealed himself beneath their shade. The storm was increasing fast. Peal after peal of thunder reverberated around so loudly, that he feared that no one could sleep; and the rain now fell in torrents. As it increased he felt afraid of remaining where he was. He thought of again taking shelter in his late prison, but he shuddered at the idea, though he slowly left the retreat he had chosen. He quitted it by a different path, and, after walking some time, he found himself opposite another part of the edifice he had before seen, and which on this side appeared to be in ruins; the gardens of the palace appeared extensive, and were studded with vases, statues, and alcoves. Under shelter of one of these, he placed himself to

await the conclusion of this war of the elements.

The scene was magnificent. Never before had he witnessed so grand and awful a storm. Twice at a distance he saw the lightning fall. At last he himself was struck to the ground, but not insensible. He heard the tremendous crash which followed instantly, and raised his head. The palace was in flames, and his first impulse was to fly to the assistance of its inhabitants; but he restrained himself. He knew that they must be awake, and therefore on the alert to save themselves. Eagerly, however, he watched their movements. Crowds burst at once from the doors and lower windows, and Sir Nicolas gazed in hopes of seeing the young Amine—vainly—a man appeared, whose looks, bearing, and handsome half undress, showed his rank.

"My child!" he said, wildly; "where is my child? I know not where to find her—she has not slept in her own apartment. Tell me, is she safe?" At first, no one answered, till, with trembling steps, a slave advanced. "Old Onah, the young lady's nurse, was ill," he said, "and she went, as he believed, to sleep by her side."

"And where," said the Emir, in agony, "is her room?" The man pointed to where the flames were just bursting out, and as he did so a faint scream was heard. The wretched father could hear no more, and exclaiming, "My child is lost!" he fell senseless on the ground.

Sir Nicolas had listened only to learn where Amine was, when he sprang from his hiding-place, and seizing a cloak from the shoulders of a person near, hastily dipped it in a fountain by which he passed, and followed to the spot whence the scream had issued. Inundated as he was with rain, the flames did not touch him, and he kept rushing on until he stumbled over something in his way. One look showed him the faint, exhausted, girl. He folded her in his cloak, and hastily retraced his steps. The stairs had given way —destruction must overwhelm them. One hope alone remained; the floor seemed falling beneath his feet. He darted to the window; the height was fearful, but the only chance of escape was by it. He folded her closely to his bosom, fastened his girdle tightly round her, and sprang from the window just as the tottering woodwork on which he stood gave

way. One of his feet turned as he reached the ground, but she was saved unhurt; and a violently-sprained ancle was the only injury which he received. He resigned the fair and now reviving child to her father's arms, and was himself carried into a part of the building still remaining, amidst the prayers and blessings of all around. The thanks of the father and child were rapturous, and Amine clung round him with tears and caresses till her father separated them.

Sir Nicolas was placed in a sumptuous room, his ancle bathed, and every elegance and comfort richly stored around him, and he soon sank into a happier sleep than he had enjoyed for many months.

CHAPTER VII.

When Sir Nicolas Leak awoke in the morning, he found himself unable to move his foot. He regretted this the more, as he hoped and believed, from what he had heard of Mohammed's character, that he should be now immediately released. But, alas! he deceived himself, and had forgotten those words which had been repeated to him—"Never again may he have liberty." Besides, Sir Nicolas knew not that, when attending the funeral of his brother, the rash Emir had sworn that though, to please his child,—a Christian's child!—he had given a Christian life, yet never should he be restored to liberty. His brother should also weep his death as he had done, or wife, parents, or children deplore his loss.

" So help me Alla as I keep this vow !" he concluded, as he turned from the grave. It was to harden his heart against the intreaties of his Amine, to whom he feared he might, as he thought, weakly yield, that he had thus bound himself; and when she next petitioned for the stranger's release, which was that very night, he told her of his vow. He almost repented it, as she burst into tears, and looked so sadly on him, saying,

" O father ! how could you do so ? He is a countryman of my mother's—an Englishman. Now, I know that I can do nothing for him unless you will release him from his dungeon."

Her father shook his head; and she found that, for the present, at least, she could only relieve his solitude and captivity by the attentions of her dependent Hassan. If Sir Nicolas spent the night after the storm in peaceful sleep, not so Mohammed. To Sir Nicolas he owed his only treasure, and yet he was bound to keep him from all he loved and valued. It must be so: he could not break his vow. When Amine came to bless him by her presence, his emotion was excessive, and he pressed her again and again to his bosom.

"Why, dear father, do you seem so hurried?" she inquired. He explained the reason, and told her she must speak to her deliverer of his resolve at once.

"Tell him," he said, "a Mahometan dares not break an oath sworn at a brother's grave, or he were free. Everything that luxury or power can give, he may claim;—all that a father's gratitude would willingly bestow; but, in return, I must have his word not to attempt escape. Would that he would break it!" muttered he.

"Nay, father; that would not be like an honourable Christian," said Amine.

"What know you, child, of Christians? Alla is your God, and Mahomet his prophet."

"O yes, I know," she answered, pettishly; "though my mother did not say so, either; but I have almost forgotten what she did say."

"One thing more," continued the Emir. "He must not speak to you on his religion; but that he will not dare to do. Go, child; thank him again for me, for having saved your precious life, and comfort him, as you so well know how to do, in his affliction."

Amine obeyed. Scarcely would she have recognised Sir Nicolas, so much had a good

night, the luxury of the bath, and bright hopes, changed his appearance. For a moment she stood looking on him with surprise, then sprang into his arms, exclaiming,

"I thought it must be you; but looking so very much improved and altered, and so joyful——"

It was some time before he could gather from her faltering accents, broken by sobs, the cause of her emotion. When he had heard her artless tale, it was for him to look hurried, miserable. The paleness of death was on his face.

"Shall I then never more behold my country?" he exclaimed, in agony: "my beloved wife, my child, will you never again bless my sight?"

Amine wept with him.

"I know not how to comfort you," she said; "but let me be your child instead of the one you have lost: perhaps she was like me."

"No, surely not," said Sir Nicolas, with a deep sigh; "if, indeed, I have a girl. Ah!" he exclaimed, raising his eyes to heaven, "have mercy on me. Let me not linger out a weary life, far from all I love. Go, tell

your father I will not accept his favours. Let him throw me again into my prison; thence I may possibly escape; but my word once given, I should have no hope, and without it, think not I can exist. No; life, a weary burden, would soon be over."

"And surely," said the child, "in that sad place you cannot live. O! go not there again. Live, I intreat you. For my sake, dear second father, live."

As she spoke, she knelt before him, and clasped his hands in hers. He started. A sudden thought entered his mind. As she thus knelt, with face without one shade of colour, but beautiful in sadness, and figure perfect in childish symmetry, the sun's bright rays fell on her.

"Ah!" he thought, "what a creature is that before me, glowing even at that youthful age with fervent passions and affections,—leaning to virtue's side. How, unfortunate! will she steer her little bark through the shoals and sands of life? Would that the sun of righteousness might gild her path! It may be so," he continued, "and I may be the humble instrument of good. Father!"—and again he raised his eyes,—"thy will be done!"

Then, turning to the child, he lifted her up.

"Amine," he said, "for thy sake I will strive to live. Thy entreaties are not in vain. Leave me now to gain consolation alone."

"Alone?" said she, gently.

"Yes, my dear child; a Christian is never less alone than when he appears so to be to all the world."

"I do not understand you," she replied.

"I trust that at some time you will," said Sir Nicolas.

"May I tell my father that you accept his offers?"

"You may."

She left the apartment, and hastened to inform her father with a light and happy heart.

It was some months before Sir Nicolas could leave the house. Sorrow made dreadful ravages in his health, though he was always composed and tranquil. Amine was his constant companion, and her father often accompanied her; and, indeed, became almost as much attached to his captive as his child was. He avoided touching on religion, at present, before either; for he felt that he first

must gain the confidence of the father. To enlighten Amine's ductile mind would be no difficult task, as her prejudices were all in favour of Christianity.

Time passed on, and he possessed the full affection of both. He was Amine's teacher, too, in most things, and it was her constant endeavour to please him, and imitate what he described to her of the English customs and manners.

Without telling her from whence he got them, he imprinted on her mind many of the Christian rules, and found her a very apt scholar. He taught her to control her feelings and passions because it was right to do so, and pleasing to the Governor of the world; and such rules or remarks she would repeat to her father, and add,

"What a religion that of Sir Nicolas must be, which makes alike the conduct and the heart virtuous and pure!"

The father listened at first with fear; but when he found no mention of a God, and saw his daughter daily grow more pleasing, kind, and amiable, more attentive to him, and, if possible, more affectionate, he blessed Alla for the instruction he had sent to his child, and was more than satisfied—secure.

Nine years had now passed since Sir Nicolas had left his prison. Amine was sixteen, and yet she worshipped "the unknown God." He felt that it was time to answer the inquiries she had often made as to his religion—inquiries which he had hitherto avoided, under the plea that she was too young to judge for herself on such subjects. The fact was, that he wished her religious principles to be grounded before they met with opposition: —and that they would meet with opposition he could not for one moment doubt. About this time, Mohammed left his home for a longer period than usual, to take part in an approaching war. Sir Nicolas determined not to let the opportunity pass. He was walking one evening with her on the terrace, watching the sun, which was setting without a cloud.

"How very beautiful!" said Amine, with a short sigh of pleasure.

"Very!" he returned, in a contemplative tone; "I never watch the sun set thus serenely but I think on a happy death."

"There may be some resemblance," she said; "but, I must own, I think not much. It is true, when the person dies whom we

love best on earth, I should think all that was desirable and beautiful would fade, and night enwrap one; but that would be endless night, while this——. Only think, dear father, how magnificently yon sun will rise to-morrow, while they would sleep for ever in the dust!"

"I differ from you, my dear."

"What!" said she in a smiling manner, "think you then a paradise exists beyond those skies, and that I shall be a houri brighter than day, more beautiful than aught on earth?"

"I not only think, but am persuaded, Amine, that there is a world beyond this—that a Christian's entrance into that abode of light and happiness will be indeed resplendent."

"Dear, dear friend," she said, turning towards him, "teach me, I beg of you, your religion. It was my mother's, and faintly though I recollect her death, it was a happy one. Her last words were, 'My child, may God protect thee, and may we meet again in heaven.' O that this prayer may be accomplished! For, beautiful and delightful as this world is, it does not seem to satisfy me,

and if I ever think of your death or my father's, I am wretched. O that I could possess your blessed resignation! Separated as you have so long been from all you love on earth, tell me, I beseech you, where do you gain your fortitude? I am now no child, and will give all my attention to your words."

"Amine," he said, tenderly, "all your happiness depends on the use to which you apply my words. Mine I should not say, but those of the Saviour of mankind. I will give you all the instruction in my power; but the effect rests not with me. You must pray to that God of whom I will tell you, to enlighten your mind, and change your heart. May your prayers, my child, be accepted."

As he spoke, he sat down with her on a sloping bank, and in few words, but as distinctly as he could, gave her an outline of the Christian scheme. She listened in amazement. Could it be?—such immense love—to die for sinners! She thought it easy to die for those we love; but for enemies—— !

"Amine," he continued, "if you, a weak and feeble creature, could die for those you love, can you not believe that the all-perfect

God, to save millons of sinful men, might die even for his enemies, although in rebellion against him? Might, do I say? O he DID, he DID! His precious blood was shed for us, ungrateful as we are; but surely the time will come when we shall be enabled, through his atoning blood, to adore and praise him as we ought."

He clasped his hands in emotion. Then, taking a crucifix from his bosom, looked on it and kissed it with holy rapture, unmindful of the young girl who gazed on him with breathless interest. For a time he remained in silent prayer. He then said,

"My dear Amine, I can give you proofs for all that I have asserted;—proofs which no power on earth has ever been able to gainsay or resist. May the good seed be sown in a fruitful soil!"

He saw her emotion, and thought it best to leave her to commune with herself. He took her hand, therefore, and, bidding her good night, said,

"Pray, my child, for thyself, as I shall do for thee."

CHAPTER VIII.

When Sir Nicolas Leak next met Amine, the general calmness of her countenance had undergone a change; her beautiful eyes were more animated, her cheek more flushed, and her appearance betrayed a degree of excitement he had never seen before.

"Dear friend," she said hastily, "give me, I entreat you, the proofs you mentioned, instruct me fully in your religion, though I can even now scarcely doubt its truth, since it is yours—the fruits of it are so delightfully manifested by you."

"You must not take it, my dear, on trust," said he; "together we will examine its separate parts, and I doubt not you will experience its blessed effects."

"But," she said, "if it be true, surely it

were wrong to defer one single moment—to deny such a God—to turn away from such a divine religion."

"Amine," returned Sir Nicolas, interrupting her, "it would indeed be wrong, after you were convinced of its truth, to turn away; but at present you have only to consider coolly and dispassionately the evidence I shall place before you, and not to let your feelings carry you beyond your reason."

"Coolly and dispassionately!" said she. "O how impossible, when our eternal interest is concerned! You surely forget how great the stake."

"Indeed I do not, my dear; I would wish you to enter warmly on the subject, but yet I would not have your usual serenity so soon displaced. True it is, you must give your whole heart to God, but, in exchange, he will give you peace."

"The whole heart, did you say? I really think I have no heart to give, mine is already so full of love." Sir Nicolas smiled.

"My dear," said he, "you may love your friends with the fullest affection, only a superior love must be experienced towards your heavenly Father: to him your will, your

dearest hopes must bend, and the language of your heart must always be obedience." Tears filled her eyes.

"I should indeed think," said she, "that religion right which brought me to such a state of mind, for much I fear it will be my fate to suffer."

"I hope not," answered Sir Nicolas; "and am surprised, my child, that such a thought has ever entered your head."

"Surprised, dear friend? What, when you often say you never saw a girl with so much reflection? Do you wonder if the fear of evil is sometimes too present to my thoughts?"

"What evil can you even dream of?" said he.

"Far too much! my father's death—your return home—think me not selfish, though my heart should break, I would bid you go; but it would surely break. Only think what a wretched, solitary being I should then be. To you I owe all that has made this life delightful. What then would be my fate? I would not wish you to remain one moment longer than could be avoided. No, you should go and join your precious ring, while I—"

"You, Amine, if that time ever arrive, will, I hope, have fixed your hopes and thoughts on higher objects, than such weak mortals as your father or myself."

"I trust I shall," said she, "but wonder not, if with such a hope in view, I pine till I possess it. If my flushed cheeks and feverish lips are proofs of my anxiety, with such a stay as you last night held out, I think I could bear any misery, for it would be but for a time." She paused, and then said, "But I will go and walk, and come back to my lessons as composed as you wish me."

She left Sir Nicolas in deep regret; he now saw, what for a few months he had feared, that Amine was not happy, and he acknowledged to himself that the moment which restored him to hope, would crush it for ever in her breast; yes!—for ever: he could not deceive himself. Highly gifted as she was, where could she find those in Palestine, when her father should be dead, who would understand her feelings, much less sympathize with them? He trembled at the thought of the suffering that he might innocently cause to this young fascinating creature; and he felt that he could no longer

dwell with delight on the prospect of his return home, since happiness to him would be misery to her. Perhaps too, when he should return, he might find his fondly-remembered wife married to another, or perhaps dead. He rose, and hastily paced the apartment; an undefined feeling of dread struck on his heart. He pressed his ring to his lips, and hoped that his Anna, with himself, might remember "constancy." And for Amine—he would continue the friend he was; to her he would be *more*, infinitely more—he would lead her to heaven; and he prayed that he might be strengthened to keep all his good resolves.

By the time that she returned, they were both calm, and entered immediately on their new studies. Day after day, did he instruct her in true religion, and saw with pleasure all her young sensibilities and affections follow in the track he had pointed out, and ascend in grateful love to heaven. Together did they trace the steps of their Redeemer through Jerusalem and the adjacent country, and many were the tears Amine shed, as well in recounting his sufferings, as in thinking on the blindness of her own misguided countrymen.

"Even my own dear father," she would say, "is an infidel. I tremble when I think that in another world I never may behold him, but if prayers are heard surely he will be converted."

"Fear not, my child," Sir Nicolas would answer, "your father will listen to your voice—and from your lips learn where immortal happiness may be found." Sometimes Amine would thank and bless Sir Nicolas.

"You saved my life," she would say, "and O how did I thank you for it! but now to you, under heaven, I owe the hope of everlasting life;—what incalculable benefits!"

Thus in happiness and increasing knowledge, two years passed away: and Amine had become (almost unconsciously to Sir Nicolas) a young and blooming woman. Mohammed was daily expected, and for a longer time than he had lately been at home, for he had been wounded, and came to renovate his health. The journey brought on a violent attack of fever, and for many days his life was despaired of. The solicitude with which Amine attended him was excessive; she never left his side, and every thought was given to her father. If he should die,

where were her hopes of a reunion? The thought was agony. The crisis of his disorder arrived, passed, and yet he lived. A few days, and he began slowly to recover, but very slowly—and it seemed probable, at his age, for he was past sixty, that he might never be restored from the shock that his constitution had received. Her immediate fears removed, Amine felt for herself,—had he indeed died what would have become of her? From this moment a shade of melancholy was visible on her face, her eyes were often moistened with tears, her step and manner became more languid, and her health, never robust, began to droop; but so slowly and silently did all this advance, that it was long before any one was aware of it. Sir Nicolas first remarked it; he often found her in tears, and much as he had feared that this melancholy might affect her health, he now saw it had done so.

"Dearest Amine," he one day said, on thus finding her, "you surely are not well, or where is your fortitude?"

"Sir Nicolas," she returned, "do not blame me; I truly am not well, though I

have no pain or suffering about me, except—" and she smiled faintly—"it is the heart-ache. I am weak, getting weaker ever since my father's illness—but so very little, I think that it cannot hurt me. I do not believe I am intended for long life, and would you blame me, if the thought is pleasing to me? surely you, better than myself, must know how far superior the happiness of another world is to this."

"Yet, dearest, would you wish to leave your friends?"

"Will not those friends leave me?" she asked and raised her eyes: "is not the hope on which you live, that of departing from this your prison-house? Do you not long to see again your beloved wife, such as you left her? Beats not your heart with rapture at the thought? O ask me not if *I* would leave my friends, they will soon leave me. My father now is well again, but he is not strong; we cannot, nay, you know you do not, think, that he can live many years—and still, young in years and hopes, you look with delight to freedom. With such a prospect before me, I were more than mortal to wish for life."

"Amine," said he in a gentle tone, and took her hand, "I cannot deny that the thought of returning to my home is pleasing to me; but you are not so unjust as to think that the idea of leaving you is not most painful. Would that you could accompany me, Amine: may it not be?—perhaps your father might be persuaded—and it is possible that the change would benefit his health. In England I would introduce you to those who—"

"Name it not," said she faintly; "never can it be,—no, death alone is left for me, a lingering death in loneliness and sorrow."

"Never, never," said Sir Nicolas, with emotion, "rather would I stay for ever here." Amine blushed deeply, then turned deadly pale as she exclaimed,

"For God's sake, in mercy, be careful what you say—O you do not know my heart!" Burying her face in her hands she sobbed bitterly. Sir Nicolas rose.

"Listen to me, Amine," he said. He then put his arm round her, and kneeling by her side, pressed her for a moment to his bosom. "Listen to me calmly," he continued in a solemn tone, "there is but one human being I love

better than yourself. That being is my wife. If she still survive, she believes me dead, or is at least resigned to my loss; I will therefore for your sake remain here for ever, nor be the cause of misery to so beloved a being. But I love my God and my salvation better than either of you. And therefore, Amine, I must only be, as I have ever been, your friend: I could not send to learn tidings of my family; it would be known I lived, and pardon me, Amine, I might pine for them again. I need say no more, your own heart will tell you all my feelings."

"O happiness supreme!" said the agitated girl, involuntarily returning his embrace. Sir Nicolas felt disappointed. It was but for a moment; she disengaged herself, and fixed on him eyes full of admiration and love, while her cheeks glowed with the brightest blushes, and smiles irradiated her face.

"Happiness indeed," she continued; "O my friend, my beloved friend, if any human creature had ever an excuse for giving love unsought, I am that being. Who could have dwelt beneath the full blaze of your superior virtue without loving you? Your last words have restored me to peace of mind; had you

not been the husband of another, I had been your choice; there is but one human being you love beyond myself. Those were your words, and even now for me you would sacrifice your all of earthly happiness. But think not I will accept the offering; no, like you, I can be generous, and you shall again be happy. I too, you may believe me, shall be happy. I shall dwell for ever in your memory; and often will you speak to your own Anna of the not too fond Amine. No; not to feel your virtues were not to have a heart; and when we meet again in yonder brilliant heaven, I shall be blessed." She took his hand and pressed it reverently to her lips. "One thing more, dear friend, think not of me as a drooping, love-sick girl, I am resigned, more than that — I am thankful. When we meet again, let this scene be forgotten;" and before he could answer, she was gone.

When they did meet again, Sir Nicolas saw with pleasure a cheerful expression on Amine's face; serenity and peace dwelt there; and she appeared as if no earthly passion would ever again have power to shake them. She behaved to him in her usual manner; there was no consciousness to call the unbidden blush to her pale cheek. Her

eye met his with the open confidence of allowed affection; she had not a feeling to disguise—virtue and purity alone dwelt in that heart. Her father's health was delicate, and she thought it probable that she might, ere many years were passed, lose both her friends; but if so, it was the will of God, and she bowed to it with resignation. It was possible, that she might not live to see the events which she dreaded. If she should, then, at last, she was convinced that her heart would break—she was not formed to struggle long with misery. In the meantime she was quite contented, and strove by degrees to impart to her father a portion of her religious feelings, but at present vainly; he shrunk with horror from the subject, though he felt that his religion was no longer that of his own dear child.

As time passed over her head, Amine became more cheerful; each day, she felt, brought the conclusion of her life more near, and she was not only happy but most blest. One day she had been walking with her father beneath too warm a sun.

"Let us sit down," she said in a languid tone, "I am not quite well."

"Not well, my child?" said he looking at

her with surprise, as the alteration in her appearance struck him for the first time. He put his arm hastily round her, to support her, and shuddered violently. She fainted, and when she revived, she was shocked at the horror visible in her father's face, and with a smile assured him that she was much better, and only tired.

"You had not used to be so soon fatigued, my child," said Mohammed.

"But I am weaker now, you know, dear father; long, very long have I been getting weaker."

Her father did not answer; his eyes were suddenly opened, and he wondered how it was possible that he should never before have seen the change. It had been, however, so very gradual, she had appeared so smiling, so serene, that even now he scarcely could believe that she was so much altered. Her once round form was thin and drooping, her large soft eyes had become languid, her cheek pale, save when the hectic of disease was glowing upon it. As he looked upon his child, the father felt as if some magic wand had changed her, or until now covered his eyes. The veil was removed, and it was long before

he regained his composure. Vainly did he strive in every way to restore her health. Amine at length told him she was convinced she never could recover.

"I am not dying, father," she continued, "only drooping; I may, I believe, yet live for years, for a happy mind revives the body, but I know I never can be well again, and pardon me if I say, I do not wish it. Willingly would I live to close your eyes, and save you from the anguish of my loss. Let us not then, dearest father, lose our present happiness in unavailing regret."

"Child," returned her father, "how you talk! what! must I, a poor old miserable man, lose my sole treasure—my own, my loving child, and not regret?—surely the thought alone will drive me mad."

Amine wept bitterly at her father's sorrow, and Sir Nicolas took the earliest opportunity of telling him that such emotion would kill her.

"I think," he continued, "she speaks truly, and that with care she may live for years; but agitation like that which she has to-day endured will not bear frequent repetition. She has," he added, "one wish, of which

she has requested me to tell you. You know, my friend, she has long since imbibed the Christian religion; she says that her only comfort now is in its doctrines and precious promises, and that her greatest delight is in speaking of it. She wishes then that you would allow her and myself to converse on such subjects before you, as she would willingly neither give up the delight of seeing you, nor yet deprive herself of her only true enjoyment. She knows that your complying with her wish would be the greatest sacrifice on your part, but she trusts that you will not refuse."

"I can refuse her nothing," said Mohammed, "and indeed, however hateful to my feelings may be her religion, I feel convinced that such a creature as my Amine is, must be blessed in paradise, whatever creed she may profess."

From this time nothing peculiar occurred; Amine drooped and revived again, month after month, year after year, and grew each day more happy, if I may be allowed the expression—became more heavenly in her feelings and appearance. It had been the first struggle in her mind which had implanted the

seeds of disease in a constitution, so delicate that nothing was ever afterwards able to remove them. Even happiness was now too much for her exhausted frame; her passion for Sir Nicolas Leak, if so it might be called, had long been purified from any earthly feeling; and in listening to his accents, when speaking to her father or herself on religion, the holy affection and admiration which she felt was such as angels might experience, and gratitude made her heart beat with delight in his presence. Her father now heard, with interest, Sir Nicolas' remarks, and began to think that his religion and Amine's must be right. He thus gave to his child, by his apparent approbation, that which alone was wanting, to make her cup of life, as she would often say, sweetly full even to overflowing.

It seemed that the thread, which fastened her to life was now being quickly but gently loosened. She had never suffered—she still did not suffer—but she was almost too weak to move. The colour of her cheek, and the brightness of her eye, were scarcely human. She lay almost constantly out of doors, under a canopy raised for shade, and never had she

been half so dear and interesting as now. One evening, she had breathed quickly and been exhausted all the day, she partially revived—her father had just left her.

"My friend," she said to Sir Nicolas, "I have only one wish: till he is gone do not leave my father—the poor old man will not live long when his loved child is dead."

"You know, Amine, I cannot leave him."

"I have the brightest hope," she said; "it is, that he will be a Christian: when that day comes he will give you freedom, and then—"

"Fear not," interrupted Sir Nicolas, "I promise never to leave him."

"I thought you would not, ever kind and good." She was silent awhile, and then said, "Look once again at that beautiful sun. I feel as if I should take my flight with it; when its last ray falls on me, my spirit will have fled. Mine will be the happy death of which you told me."

"Say not so, dearest Amine," he said; "we know not yet how to bear to lose you; a little longer, I trust, you'll linger with us." She smiled and shook her head.

"I have been much worse during the last few days, and feared to tell you," said she;

" but I am convinced my death is near—death I should not call it—but life, immortal life."

At this moment Mohammed returned—and bending down kissed his daughter; as he did so, the tears fell on her face; she raised her eyes to him.

" Be happy, dearest father, do not regret me, only think how blessed I shall be." She held out her hands to each of them, and said to Sir Nicolas, " Lend me your crucifix to kiss." He put it to her lips. She then looked at and kissed his ring, saying, " May you be happy with your wife and child! you who have caused my happiness here, and taught me where to seek it hereafter—pray for me." He did as she requested him; when he had concluded, the deep silence was only broken by the sobs of the father. She raised her hand and pointed to the sun. A few moments, and its daily course would be finished. She looked at Sir Nicolas; he stooped down and kissed her forehead, already cold as marble. " Father," she said, and turned her dying eyes on him; he pressed her to his bosom and still held her there. " I come, I come," murmured she, looking up towards heaven; " O too, too blessed!" Sir Nicolas raised his

eyes also. The last faint ray was quivering above the horizon. He turned his head—Mohammed held closely in his arms his child, no longer one among the living, and some moments passed before he would believe that she indeed was gone. When he did see the truth, without a word or sigh, he placed her on the couch, and fell senseless by her side.

CHAPTER IX.

It is not necessary to describe to my reader the feelings of the father or the friend on poor Amine's death. One consolation, however, Sir Nicolas had in reflecting on her happiness, as well as in the idea that he himself had been the humble instrument, in the hand of Providence, of rendering her thus blest.

It was long before Mohammed could listen even to his friendly voice; but the excess of grief at length passed away—and then he loved to speak of his lost child—to ask him to repeat her words—to dwell with fond regret on every word and action. Amine's prophecy was soon accomplished; her father, in search of consolation, became a Christian, and in his anguished moments first felt true peace. His health had received a shock,

from which it seemed probable he would never recover, and a shade hung on his brow which Sir Nicolas thought was fear of death. He was mistaken, the awakened infidel had no fear. "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief!" was his daily prayer and confession; and he became more strong in faith. If an added melancholy was on his countenance, it was because he felt that a rash vow should not be kept; and still he dreaded to lose his only remaining earthly prop. At length, however, after much prayer and exertion, he one day thus addressed Sir Nicolas:

"My son, few words are best. I have been unjust to you; the time, thank God, is past—you are free, and a large portion of my riches yours. I scarcely know how to part with you, but it is right; the will of God be done; perhaps the sooner the better." Sir Nicolas Leak's face glowed with delight. The Emir turned from him. "I know you must feel happy," he said, "but pity a poor, lone, old man's feelings, and look not so joyful."

"Is it possible," said Sir Nicolas, taking his hand with emotion, "that you so mistake me? No, if I look happy, it is at your generosity. But never will I leave you, if I

may remain to close your eyes, or see you again in health and happiness."

"I thank you," said Mohammed, when he could speak. "My son, a short time, and I shall sleep beside my child: until then your presence will be indeed a blessing—to soothe this life and fit me for a better."

The amiable Sir Nicolas Leak again found pleasure in nursing and consoling a fellow creature—one, whom in spite of his treatment of himself he had always loved, and now reverenced. Mohammed, too, was not unhappy, and beheld his approaching dissolution with calm and steady resignation.

It was rather more than a year after his daughter's death, that he breathed his last, and, almost with his dying breath, blessed God for having sent a christian captive to turn him from darkness to light—to teach him repentance, and to smooth the rugged path to eternity. Sir Nicolas Leak, also, as he saw the Emir placed by his daughter's side, praised God that he had been enabled to perform his duty to both, and no longer regretted that seventeen years of his life had been past far from all whom he loved. He thought of Amine—her goodness and affec-

tion—of her father's constant kindness—and bitter were the tears he shed over them. He felt as if he should never again be happy, as if the void now made in his heart could never again be supplied. He almost blamed himself for not having taken Amine to his heart, and at once renouncing all thoughts of returning home; but in another moment his conscience told him that he had acted rightly, and with more composure he left the mausoleum which contained all that remained of those, who in life had been so precious to him.

Sir Nicolas Leak soon made arrangements for leaving Palestine. Haroun Murah, who had long been acquainted with him, willingly allowed him to depart: he hired a ship, and ere another month had passed was on his passage to England. Many and various were his thoughts during the lengthened voyage, for adverse winds and storms twice forced them to put into port for safety and repairs. His heart now throbbed, as it turned to his own dear home; and the nearer he approached, the more he sickened at the fear of finding his dear Anna no longer his. At times he felt as if he had only dreamed; Amine

seemed to flutter by him as a bright child of imagination, and Palestine, and all the various scenes he had encountered there, appeared a mere delusion. But he looked at a lock of her ebon hair, which he wore in a locket in his bosom—he gazed on a diamond ring of the Emir's which was on his finger, or cast his eyes on his own rich Saracen dress, and felt that all was reality. This dream indeed was past for ever, but what was become of his youthful, beauteous, blooming bride, and his child?

This question, often asked but never answered, agitated him extremely; and when he first put his foot on English ground, increased so much as to bring on an illness. As soon as he was able, he left his train (among whom was Hassan) to follow him, and hastened on his journey home. He dared to ask no question; eager yet afraid to hear the truth, he knew not how to act. During his journey, however, he accidentally gained intelligence which made his heart bound with transport. He heard that Lady Leak still lived, and that her son, the young Sir Nicolas, was, like himself in former times, much loved in the country. In the certainty

of happiness, he now increased his speed; he scarcely felt fatigue, and though obliged to stop and rest his horse, he himself took no rest. Early on the third day from his leaving London, he arrived at Mansfield, a few miles from which his house was situated: he stopped at an inn to refresh his horse. His thoughts were too much taken up to mark the astonishment his dress and manner caused wherever he went; nor did anything seem to make any impression on him, until he heard his son's name mentioned: he listened, a wedding was spoken of, the blood rushed to his heart.

"Is Sir Nicolas," inquired he, "young as he is, going to be married?"

The person to whom he spoke stared at him with surprise, as in a careless tone he answered, "No, not he, the lady." Sir Nicolas shivered.

"When did you say the wedding was to take place?"

"This morning at ten o'clock."

"And now what is the hour?"

"I think it is nearly that time now," returned the man.

"God forbid!" exclaimed Sir Nicolas, and putting spurs to his already jaded horse he

galloped on. He did not stop till he had entered the grounds, when he was for a moment impeded by a number of old and infirm people, each carrying a loaf. He instantly recollected that this was the anniversary of the day on which he had left his home, just eighteen years before, and he felt that this was a tribute to his memory.

"My good woman," he said, as he checked his horse to let one pass, "from what charity do you receive those loaves?"

"From Sir Nicolas Leak's dole," returned she, dropping a curtsey. He sighed deeply.

"Tell me, is the lady to be married today?"

"They are now in the church."

Sir Nicolas waited to hear no more; he sprang from his horse and ran towards the church; the doors were shut, but he opened them and entered. The scene swam before his eyes, but he darted rapidly down the aisle; the wedding train was there, and before the altar knelt, as when last he saw her, his wife, covered entirely with a white, transparent veil, from under which shone out her sunny locks and dazzling, bright complexion.

"Stop, stop!" he exclaimed, in a voice

hoarse from emotion, "you know not what you do." The lady rose in alarm, and turned towards him.

"Anna," he said, "is it possible you do not know me?—am I so much disguised?" and he pushed his turban from his bronzed brow, and gazed with touching tenderness upon her. Surprise seemed to keep the party silent, the young lady threw back her veil, and timidly advanced a step or two.

"Am I awake?" he said, struck by her youthful face; "surely you are my own—own wife. A son they say I have—speak," and he held out half the ring—"surely I must be dreaming."

"Father, father!" exclaimed Mary, in rapture, "it is, it must be he." At the instant a faint scream was heard near at hand, and Sir Nicolas looked from the fair vision, which at first had fixed his eyes. The lady he now looked on, was at the moment pale as death, but every feature told him this was indeed his wife. She held out her hand in silence; on her finger was the ring interwoven with his hair. She could neither move nor speak, but blessed were the tears which they mingled together, as they embraced fervently.

In another moment the children of Sir Nicolas Leak were in his arms; and before they left the church, Lord Dacre received from her father the inestimable gift of his daughter's hand.

DEATH AND REUNION.

And yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of thee in heaven.

MILTON.

[The following tale is narrated in the person of one, whom I shall call, for the time, Charles Barton.]

DEATH AND REUNION.

It was a beautiful evening. The sun had just set, and the pure blue of the sky was softened into paler hues till it nearly approached the horizon, where again it glowed with the deepest tints of crimson. Far as the eye could reach, not a cloud was visible. The earth was clad in the bright-green verdure of an early May; scarcely a sound was heard, save the cheerful notes of a few stray warblers, and the distant hum of the neighbouring villages. All nature seemed happy and at rest as I closed my garden gate, and proceeded to take my customary ramble.

For some time I walked on, enjoying the delightful calm of the evening, or occasionally

painting such brilliant scenes as the age of twenty-five and a sanguine disposition love to picture, when my steps and reflections were at once arrested by the appearance of a venerable old man, who was seated by the road-side, and had until then been concealed from my view by the luxuriant branches of a beech-tree, against which he leaned.

The figure and countenance of this man interested me. His hat was off; his head was silvered o'er with age; one hand leaned on a staff, and the other hung droopingly on the neck of a spaniel, on which his light grey eyes were fixed in a manner which proved he saw it not.

"Good day, my friend," said I, approaching him; "are you enjoying this fine evening?"

He raised his eyes, and I saw the tears were in them, though his appearance was marked with the most touching resignation.

"God bless you, sir! I am not *enjoying*. Enjoyment here I know not:—this evening I have followed my youngest and last child to the grave. Thank God, a few months will reunite me to her!"

I looked attentively at the man before me,

and an indistinct recollection of him flashed on my mind. I felt that I had known him; but where, or at what distance of time, I could not determine. He appeared to have a similar recollection of myself, for the eyes before bent on vacancy were now fixed on me with an earnest and inquiring gaze. Another moment, and the bright gleam of pleasure flushed his face, and he grasped my hand in both his, and thanked God that he had once more seen me.

"Yes! it is the very same kind-hearted Charles Barton I have so often carried on my back up yonder steep hill! To be sure, the round healthy face, so bright with pleasure, is no longer here—but why do I speak on what *has been?* Charles, Master Charles, can you discover in this bent frame, trembling with age and suffering, the hale, stout man who was once your greatest friend and playmate?"

I interrupted him to express my pleasure and surprise at this meeting, as I knew not he was in the neighbourhood, and had not seen him for nearly fifteen years. He, too, was surprised, and said,

"I did not expect this happiness where I

came only for sorrow; but God is merciful. I had heard that you had not returned to England, and that, since your father and mother's death, you had not resided at the hall; but I am glad that they told me wrong. To have seen you once before I die is indeed a blessing."

I accompanied the old man home, and found he had been but one week the inhabitant of a small cottage, to which he had come with his daughter, then in the last stage of a consumption; who, with the flattering hope so common in her complaint, to the last imagined that her native air could restore her health. But the journey served only to hasten the event which, for her poor old father's sake alone, she dreaded. He told me his simple tale,—how a spendthrift son, bad seasons, and a hard-hearted landlord, had gradually reduced his comfortable means of support to almost nothing; how his wife had drooped and died, from the time she heard of the death of this same son, who enlisted, and fell in the first battle after his arrival on the continent. One daughter married, and died at the end of the year with her new-born babe, who only opened her eyes on this world, to close them for ever.

"But Agnes, your foster-sister, still was left, the prop and comfort of my age. Alas! now she too is gone! The misfortunes of many a year, Mr. Charles, are told in few words. Agnes was to have married Edward Denham; but we discovered that he was not a good man. You should know, sir, he had no religious principles, though he acted the hypocrite too well. She told him she could not have him. No entreaties would avail;—she was firm in her resolution. This refusal served but to irritate him; the mask fell; and now the vices which had been concealed, became fully revealed; and one night, when more than half-drunk, he joined a party to rob the mail. Interest was exerted for him, and his sentence was commuted to transportation. Agnes saw him before he left, and saw him penitent. He died on the passage, and she never recovered this terrible shock to her feelings. I beheld my poor child suffer, but thought not of danger. Fondly I imagined time and returning spring would restore her. It has indeed restored her!" continued he, after a pause; "but it is to heaven. 'I may go to her, but she can never return to me.'"

Again he stopped. I could not interrupt him, for my heart was too full. He proceeded:—

"In few words, sir, the doctor told us that change of air was the only hope. He advised us to come here. We came, and you know the result:—two days afterwards she calmly breathed her last, and, with her dying breath, bade me not lament her, as a few short years at most must reunite us. 'Till then,' said she, 'dear father, God will bless and support you; believe it, he will give you consolation under your loss.' Surely her words were prophetic!"

I told him they were; that all a friend could be, I would be to him, and how happy it would make me to return in some degree the kindness he had formerly bestowed on me. I looked at him with admiration and surprise. So resigned and contented appeared this poor old man, that when I bade him good-night, I walked home reflecting on the cause of this more than philosophical composure.

As I entered the garden, my sister Mary ran to meet me, gaily exclaiming, "What a truant you are, Charles! You have this evening even exceeded your longest ramble,

and supper has been waiting this hour. But what have you been about?—what have you seen, done, or heard? Come, in mercy, and let us have a little conversation, to repay me for the ennui I have suffered this last long hour; only see how fast the sand of that hour-glass is running through."

"Not faster, Mary, than the sand of life is passing on."

She started, and gazed on me with surprise, and then, in her usual calm, mild, and very feeling voice, exclaimed, "I wonder how I could avoid seeing before that you looked sad and serious! What has happened? But I can guess,—you have been by the dying bed of some poor person."

I related my little story, and then continued, "I am serious, dear Mary, in thinking on immortality, and wondering if the poor old man is right. Will he meet and *know* again his lost child in heaven? This is a subject on which we have no actual information; but which is, to me at least, a most interesting one."

My sister sighed.

"I had hoped, Charles, that on that subject you had made up your mind; or, at least,

that you could now think of it without that deeper shade of gloom, which it formerly left so heavily on your brow."

"Would that I possessed your happy feelings on this point," said I; "and yet from whence you draw them I know not. Do not misunderstand me; I have no more doubt of an immortality of happiness or misery than yourself;—THAT, the gospel has most fully brought to light; but the degree of knowledge we shall have of our fellow-creatures is not so plainly told; and I must own I have often felt most sensibly this uncertainty. For instance, this old man comforts himself with the idea of meeting his child in happiness hereafter;—nay, do not interrupt me. It appears to me, he has no *certainty* of this. I am even inclined to think we shall not, in another world, know those who have been our dearest friends here. At the same time, I acknowledge what painful, what wretched feelings such an opinion produces. You will tell me, perhaps, what I have often before been told, and what my conscience has repeatedly whispered, that it matters not, so that we are happy, in what that happiness consists;' and that 'eye hath not seen, nor

ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.' All this I know to be true; but yet human nature, human affections tell me, I cannot be happy here, without the hope of meeting again those dear and valued friends over whom the grave has closed. This is the reason why the regret which we both felt for the loss of our parents was softened down so much sooner in your breast than in mine. Now, Mary, if you can argue me into your opinions, I shall really be obliged to you. Only convince my reason, —my feelings are already on your side."

My sister smiled, and said, " It is difficult to convince reason without positive proof, which, at the very outset, I allow I do not possess; but I will with pleasure tell you on what my hopes are founded, nor do I think the foundation an unstable one. You would not, just now, let me interrupt you, or I was going to remark, that the very conviction which old Brookes feels so strongly is in itself a proof. Is it not believed by many who deny the divine origin of the Scriptures, that there will be a hereafter? and do not they assert, as one reason why there was no ne-

cessity for those Scriptures, 'to bring life and immortality to light,' that the conviction of a future life was so widely and deeply impressed on the mind of man by nature, that no further proof was necessary? If the natural belief of immortality is thus generally held, is not also the hope of being reunited to our departed friends as common? Have not thousands, nay, do not thousands still, comfort themselves with this reflection? You shake your head, Charles:—you will not then allow the general and cherished feelings of the many as a proof?—you would rather suppose that they are all misled by some great delusion, or that the God of truth and mercy has implanted these feelings merely to disappoint them!"

"You draw your inferences rather too strongly," said I. "I neither admit, because many feel and hope the same on a subject, that it is so, nor do I conclude that the world is given up to a great delusion. I am rather inclined to think, that the belief you mention as being general, is confined so much to the simple and unlearned, that it deserves no credit as a proof. We cannot take as evidence the fruits of ignorance, or fancies of superstí-

tion, nor admit, because people wilfully blind themselves, that they have lost the power of sight."

"Certainly not," said my sister; "but supposing, as you seem inclined to do, that the conviction I mention as being naturally fixed in the mind is *now* confined to the fond or ignorant,—to those who feel strongly, but do not search deeply,—I cannot allow that in former times it was so. Look back to the annals of antiquity, and you will find many learned names among those who believed, as inseparable, the immortality of the soul and the reunion of friends; and who, in death, looked forward to an intimate knowledge of those great and good men who had acted on the stage of life before themselves, as well as to a happy meeting with their own dear and valued connexions."

"Still, Mary, I must acknowledge," I replied, "I shall never be your convert. Had I lived in former times, I might have written or spoken in the same manner as Cicero or any other wise man you may name. I should have had longings and aspirations after immortality and the reunion of friends; and I should have fondly flattered myself, and tried

to persuade the world of the truth of my doctrine. And why should I do all this? To make myself and others happier. But do you suppose, even then, that I should not have had my doubts, my misgivings? Undoubtedly I should. Now, however, the view is changed. 'God hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us.' We are plainly taught, that 'the dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.' Would that we were as plainly told that we should be reunited to our friends in knowledge and affections!"

"We are not indeed as plainly told," answered my sister, "though there are many texts which strongly favour this opinion, and indeed, I think, almost confirm it. To return to the person who first occasioned this conversation:—I cannot give you a better proof than his own words afford, when he said, 'I may go to her, but she never more will return to me!' Unlearned and simple as you thought him, you, perhaps, were not aware that he merely applied King David's words

to himself, when, on the death of that child of sin for whose life he had in vain entreated God by fasting, prayer, and penitence, 'he washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord and worshipped: then he came to his own house, and when he required it, they did set bread before him, and he did eat.' What was his answer to the inquiries of his friends and servants, who feared to tell him that the babe he loved so fondly was no more?—'Now he is dead,' said he, 'can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.' Mark, I do not say the hope, but, the confidence here expressed by the royal Psalmist:—'I shall go to him.' Not the shadow of a doubt crosses his mind; he no longer weeps, no longer regrets; he knows that his child is in happiness. At once he resigns him to the will of his God, and consoles himself with the certainty of again meeting him. He knows that he has received but a just punishment for his sins. His penitence and prayers, by faith, have been accepted, and he shall join his son in heaven. I do not know that the Scriptures afford a stronger confirmation of the truth of the

doctrine in question than this, if we recollect who it was that thus comforted himself. He was not an unlearned, simple man, ignorant of religion and philosophy, who judged from his feelings without any regard to the dictates of reason; but one deeply versed in all human science, acquainted with all the mysteries of philosophy, the subtleties of reasoning;—the chosen king of Israel, the beloved of God, an inspired writer, richly endowed with the gifts of the Spirit, and a prophet. We cannot possibly deny to his words the testimony of truth and inspiration; and if we recollect that 'all Scripture is given by inspiration from God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,' we cannot but give all due weight to that sacred volume."

"Your reasoning, dearest Mary, is good," said I, "and, as far as it goes, the text you have cited is a positive proof; but the point on which I doubt is, not that all the blessed will go to the same abode of happiness, but whether they will there have a knowledge of each other. Of all the examples in Holy Scripture, the royal David was the most per-

fect pattern of ardent love to God. How intense his devotions! how sublime, how beautiful his aspirations after heaven! Who but he ever uttered such ecstatic longings after immortality and the presence of 'his Saviour, his God, and his might.' Might not the certainty that his child could not be restored to life induce the answer he gave to his servants? Adoring his God as he did, he knew that the babe was then enjoying the most perfect happiness, and that the time was not far distant when he should dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. Thus he was comforted, he was happy. If I attempted to explain his words, it would be thus:— 'Why should I longer lament, or entreat for the life of my infant? He is dead, and I cannot expect a miracle to be worked in my favour. *He shall not return to me*, and now all my selfish feelings are at rest. He is happy, and I would not, if I could, recal him to such a world as this. But *I shall go to him*; I shall go where the perfection of happiness will consist in being in the presence of the Almighty. David clearly alluded only to the place to which he and his child should go, and not to the degree of knowledge which

would exist between them. In my turn, Mary, I ask if you think it possible they could go to different places? Without doubt the same heaven would contain them. The sinner was already forgiven, and the child purified from original sin by the all-sufficient sacrifice subsequently offered in our blessed Saviour. The question is, not whether we shall *meet* our friends, but whether we shall *know* them in any other light than as the redeemed of God, the highly-favoured among the children of men. I still favour my own opinion, and must have better proof to silence the many objections which present themselves in opposition to your doctrine."

"Very many and perhaps better proofs you may have," said my sister, "but as I know you have eagerly read any book which fell in your way, in the least referring to the subject, I did not wish to mention those arguments with which I fancied you were familiar. You must therefore pardon me if I again draw your attention to them, probably in many instances inadvertently: for my memory is so bad that I cannot recollect the particular texts mentioned by others, though

I have been as anxious in the study of the question as yourself. What think you of the beautiful parable of the rich man and Lazarus? They certainly appear to have an immediate, I may say instinctive, knowledge of each other in another world. 'The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.' It is not specified that Dives ever saw the poor beggar on earth, or if he did, he beheld him clothed in rags, disfigured with sores, and changed by the approach of death. How different from the mortal now clothed with immortality; sown in corruption, raised in incorruption; sown in dishonour, raised in glory; sown a natural body, raised a spiritual body! How different from the being now dressed in the wedding-garment of the Lamb, and exalted to a high seat of glory! And yet he was immediately recognised. I love to fancy how, in heaven, we shall intuitively know each other, with, perhaps, a perfect recollection of the trials, hopes, and fears which we passed through, and which by turns agitated us during our state of probation whilst on earth. This parable I certainly

think strong as an argument, and it favours the conclusion I have drawn from it."

"I agree with you," said I, "that it does; —yet it is but a parable, and not to be understood literally."

"Possibly not," resumed my sister, "though I acknowledge I so apply it:—but still proof upon proof may be found in the holy writings—proofs in which no parable or allegory can be discovered. What does our Saviour mean when he says, 'Ye which have followed each other in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel?' When thus placed, the apostles, remembering this promise, cannot fail to know each other. Nay, how can they distinguish the twelve tribes of Israel without a recognising knowledge? Meditate on the transfiguration of our Saviour, and ask yourself whether Moses and Elias, appearing on the mount, and then of course, known to each other, as they were spiritually discerned by Peter, could possibly return to the abode of bliss, unacquainted with each other. It appears, to me at least, *highly* improbable. Time would fail were I

to enumerate all the proofs contained in Holy Writ. Search, and you will be satisfied of the truth of the doctrine, difficult though it may at present appear to you. One only text further will I adduce, and one, I think, as appropriate as any I have mentioned. St. Paul, speaking of the spiritual children whom God had given him among the Thessalonians, says, that they would be his 'glory and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.' But how could they congratulate each other on the grace bestowed upon them below, if all personal acquaintance were to cease? Surely there are no strangers in that land of light and love! To these quotations from the Bible I have only to add that, to me, Charles, it would really appear much more extraordinary if we are not to know our friends in another state than that we are, and from natural causes. We are always told that, in another world, we may expect an increase of our mental powers; but I cannot find one instance in which it is said that we shall lose any. The contrary appears very plainly, as at the day of judgment, we are told, we shall be required to give an account of what we have done in the body, which of

course we could not do, nor even acknowledge the justice of the sentence or the mercy of our God, if we did not fully retain our recollection of the things done on earth. Without the memory of our former life, we could not properly estimate redeeming love, and if we remember at all, shall we not naturally seek for those with whom we have held communion here? Shall we not look for the familiar friend with whom we have entered the house of the Lord, for him who, perhaps, may have first pointed out to us the path to heaven, and taught us of the grace of God, and of his merciful promises, held out to all sinners?"

"You have now alluded," said I, "to my greatest objection to this doctrine—memory. If, indeed, we do remember, what will become of us, what will be our anguish, when we discover that the one we have perhaps loved best on earth is missing? You certainly have brought forward strong, I may almost say unanswerable reasons, to prove your argument. Can you answer this my great objection?—one which has, I believe, blinded me hitherto to the proofs which you appear to have so easily and largely discovered."

"Your objection, my dear brother," replied she, "can only be answered in one way. We know that in heaven is perfect happiness, and that there, it will be impossible to feel a regret; the anguish of which you speak will therefore not exist. But it seems difficult, with human feelings and affections clinging around us, to know in what way this can be. It is often the case here, that the most faulty are the most loved; or the most admired and amiable, in every other point of view, may be wanting in love towards God. The answer, then, which I give to your objection is the command of God, 'My son, give me thy heart.' On earth, perhaps, this cannot be done entirely, but in heaven it will. Then will every minor consideration be lost in this; love will not only be the animating principle of the heart, but, like Aaron's rod, will swallow up every other. Then for the first time shall we understand and adore as we *ought* the mystery of the redemption, the justice, the mercy, the glory, and all the perfections of our God. Purified ourselves from all sin, how can we wish for fellowship with the workers of darkness? 'Raised in power,' where would be the weakness of partiality? No, in heaven it

will be as utterly impossible for us to love a son, a brother, or a husband, seeing them in all the hideousness of vice, ingrates to their God and followers of the devil, as it will be not to love those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb, clothed in his righteousness, and resplendent in the beauty of holiness."

"You do not think, then," said I, "that if in another world we meet our friends there, we shall feel more pleasure in the recognition of them than of any other person, particularly if that other were more eminent in gifts than our own earthly tie. You suppose that, without any regard to former affection, you will love the whole of heaven's assembly alike. For example, as we can scarcely find an instance of more fervent piety than the character of St. Paul; think you he will rank highest in your estimation?" My sister smiled and answered me,—

"You are going rather too far, Charles, nor can I *decide* the point by any argument whatever, though I think you will agree with me that, if I have not the *certainty* on my side, which 'proof from holy writ' would give, still I have great probability. This, I think, the character of our Saviour and his

actions while on earth give us reason to suppose; he was not only man but *perfect* man, as free from imperfection on earth, as we shall be in heaven; and yet he selected objects to love; the beloved disciple St. John was an instance of this. It would be impossible to find a more lovely picture of friendship than their lives represent. As one man loves another, so does our Saviour appear to have loved St. John; all shades between the master and the disciple, the infinite God and the finite creature, appear to have vanished; and such an intimate and endearing intimacy to have subsisted as, were we perfectly pure and sinless, might exist with us on earth, and doubtless will exist in heaven. When leaning on Jesus' breast, St. John, in compliance with the apostles' wish, asked him, as one friend would another, 'who it was who should betray him.' He had no fear of offending by the question, for 'perfect love casteth out fear,' and the answer he received was an immediate acquiesence.

"I am not going to point out to you all the instances of St. John's life in which this holy friendship is visible, and which you yourself may read in all their purity and beauty. I

will only name those which show my argument in a pleasing light. In death, the same affection was most striking. But even after death it was continued in a wonderful degree. The beloved St. John was not only visited by the Comforter, but by our blessed Lord himself, personally and visibly; and who would presume even to imagine the celestial happiness of that communion held between God and man, in the Isle of Patmos? The highly-favoured disciple, while the Messiah was on earth, continued highly-favoured when he returned to heaven; the friendship sanctified on earth by our Saviour's adoption of it was now sealed in heaven: this, in my opinion, fully authorizes the idea that any affection founded by us on virtuous principles will, in some manner, be a source of happiness to us hereafter. What I wish most to insist on is this, that where there was perfection, there peculiar attachments were visible, and were continued after death. That Saviour who loved the whole world, loved St. John in a more eminent degree. He also loved Lazarus and his sisters, and *he was perfect.* In heaven we shall be perfect, for 'we shall be like him;' and may we not then

have our particular attachments? may we not reasonably expect an increase of happiness in the society of our friends, even in paradise? The recollection that we have passed with them through many trials, emulated whatsoever things are perfect, honest, and of good report, and walked hand in hand through our pilgrimage in this world to another and a better, must, in my opinion, give a zest to the delight we enjoy with them. Besides, though they may not rank high in heaven, that matters not, as the servant who had gained one talent received the same praise as he who had gained five; the labourer who had worked one hour obtained the same hire as he who had borne the labour of the day. So in heaven, all will be too happy to think of happiness superior to their own; all too virtuous, pure, and holy, to consider the different shades of righteousness. Satisfied with adoring the fountain of all perfection, I believe that we shall also find happiness in the reunion with our friends; though that love, so inferior to the love we shall experience towards our God, deserves not to be named."

My sister paused, and for a time we both remained silent; she then said, in a lower tone,

"I certainly am right in knowing we shall meet them, and it is difficult to think that we shall do so without some added happiness in their society. No, I cannot be wrong. Charles," and she raised her voice, "did you hear me?"

"I both heard and agreed with you," said I, "and when I am inclined again to doubt on the subject, I will think upon the texts you have pointed out, and recal to mind our present conversation. It has been to me a most interesting one."

Again for some time we sat in silent thought; when we next spoke it was to exchange our usual good wishes on retiring to rest.

ILLNESS AND RESIGNATION.

Gently, most gently, on thy victim's head,
Consumption, lay thy hand; let me decay
Like the expiring lamp unseen away,
And softly go to slumber with the dead.
And if 'tis true, what holy men have said,
That strains angelic oft foretell the day
Of death, to those good men who fall thy prey,
O let the aerial music round my bed,
Dissolving sad in dying symphony,
Whisper the solemn warning in mine ear,
That I may bid my weeping friends "good-bye,"
Ere I depart upon my journey drear,
And smiling faintly on the painful past,
Compose my decent head, and breathe my last.

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

ILLNESS AND RESIGNATION.

CHARLES Arbuthnot formed one of many who were standing on the beautiful pier of Douglas, watching a steam-packet, which was on the point of leaving the Isle of Man. Several boats he had seen filled, and bear their passengers to the ship with a feeling of amusement. The jolly laugh and hurrying bustle of the sailors—the smiling "good-bye," and eager joy of some young people, who were for the first time about to visit England—the sighing regret of others—the pressure of many an extended hand—the good wishes poured around—the porters claiming their rewards—the custom-house officers, their tasks over, yet not able to lay

aside their scrutinizing, peering looks—the pale appearance of some seated in the boats, and turning yet paler as each fresh movement made the heaving motion more distinct—the roaring of the sea itself, the splashing of oars, the swearing, the screaming,—altogether formed a heterogeneous scene which had for the time interested him, and dissipated the ennui he might otherwise have felt.

But as the last boat left the pier he turned also to leave the motley scene, when the beautiful view around him attracted his attention and again detained him. It was not that he had never seen it before. Brought up on the island, almost every part of it was as familiar and well-known to him as his own garden; but he was a lover of nature, and delighted in viewing its many forms and varieties. Careless now of the noise which surrounded him, he gazed around. It was nearly high tide; the craggy rocks in the distance were almost lost in the dark clouds of a November evening, save where a wreath of foam, dashing over, marked to the observing eye its utmost limit; but here and there fantastic shapes in the cliffs so well known to him, startled him, till he discovered that they

owed their origin to some faint rays of the setting sun, which occasionally escaped from the dense clouds which obscured it, to gild with transient light the outlines of the distant hills. Castle Mona was still distinctly visible, and seemed to dwell securely beneath the shadow of the hills in solitude and peace, bounded by the ocean, and sleeping in its bosom. As this thought passed through his mind, he was struck by the now real quiet around, so different from the previous bustle. The wind was hushed, the sea had gained its height, and appeared for a moment to repose itself. The clear emerald of the mighty waters showed distinctly the pebbly shore. Even the sea-gull had ceased to scream as it dipt its shivering wings beneath the waves. He gazed on this, and then around, and was surprised to find himself alone: he had been unmindful of the passing time, and all those who had so lately surrounded him had left the pier. He too was preparing to follow, when a figure at a short distance attracted his attention. He was leaning over the low wall following the steamer with his eye. He sighed so deeply that Mr. Arbuthnot heard him, and in re-

turning passed near the gentleman with that kind of inquiring curiosity and interest which we naturally feel for those whom we believe to be in affliction; but what was his surprise, when he recognised in the supposed stranger an intimate acquaintance—and one whom he could not at that moment ever remember to have heard sigh before!

"Gustane!" said he with astonishment in his look and voice, "is it really *you* who sighed so deeply as to disturb even my meditations? what can ail you? I should suppose that you had parted from some fair mistress, had I not known from proof indubitable that you are heart-free."

"And yet it is a parting," returned the gentleman he addressed, "which has caused my melancholy; but the vessel is out of sight," he continued, following with his eyes the course it had taken through the waves; "lost in distance and the darkness that is gathering around; let us also leave this cold, dismal scene. Come and spend the evening with me, and I will tell you why I sighed at parting with one I shall never more behold. My profession often leads me into painful scenes, but I know not that I have ever been

so much interested, or (except for my most intimate connexions) suffered so severely as this day. Of all people, surely surgeons are most to be pitied. They view human nature in every shade of varied misery. If they cannot harden, they wear out, their own feelings. In short, they are a miserable set!" His friend smiled.

"You look only to one side of the question," said he; "you forget the happiness of administering ease, of alleviating pain, of curing disease. You forget the delight of friends, the rapture of restored health, the renovated bloom of youth and beauty. You forget how often you have been followed by the gratitude and thanks of those to whom, under Heaven, you have been the giver of that greatest of all earthly blessings, without which no other can be enjoyed. How often has the mother blessed you for her restored child, and how frequently those hands have been raised, that blessings might be poured on him whose care and skill had been so beneficial to them!"

"True, true," interrupted Gustane; "but had you spent this day as I have done, you also would forget if aught of pleasure were

mingled in your lot—not that it has been one of unmixed pain either: when we behold virtue and resignation in affliction, a degree of pleasing admiration is experienced, but that cannot compensate for our grief."

He was silent, nor did his friend again address him. They soon entered Mr. Gustane's common sitting-room. A bright wood fire shed a cheerful light around.

"Arbuthnot," said he, with a smile, "I depute you to do the honours. Ring for tea, and make yourself as comfortable as you can. I acknowledge to you I have over-exerted myself so much that at present you must, and will, I know, excuse my silence."

"Willingly, for a time," said Arbuthnot; "but you must not trespass too long on my patience."

His friend nodded, and, throwing himself on two chairs, gave himself up to his own thoughts. In the mean time, Mr. Arbuthnot rang for lights, and, after a time, roused Mr. Gustane, by placing before him a cup of tea.

"Your half hour of grace is past," said he gaily; "now rouse, and let Richard be 'himself again.'"

He obeyed, and, shaking from his forehead his clustering hair, showed once more the cheerful expression of countenance most suited to his features, and one which was always beheld with pleasure.

"Now," said he, after a little desultory conversation, "I will give you the history I named to you, not only because I know it will interest you, but as a kind of apology for my —I hope unusual—testiness and impatience, and because I have long seen curiosity in your face. It is now about three months since I was first called into my surgery to attend to a stranger, whose appearance immediately prepossessed me in his favour. He was tall and thin, and evidently in very delicate health. The colour on his cheek, and the dazzling brightness of his dark brown eyes, were, alas! the sure symptoms of fever; and the blue veins, visible in the fair, high, and, if I may use the expression, intelligent forehead, were proofs that he had long struggled with illness. But no trace of suffering was apparent on his countenance. A calm, placid, smile played around his mouth, and showed that the mind had not yet sympathized with the body. The expression of his

face, indeed, was one of happiness and contentment; and when he spoke, benevolence and resignation were in the tones of his voice. If on the first glance I thought him ill, when on my entrance he extended a thin, white, hand, in whose very touch was fever, I was the more convinced of it.

"He apologized for the liberty he was taking in asking me to make up a prescription, which he had always found beneficial in allaying a cough of long duration. He informed me that his name was Denbigh—that he had been advised to spend some months near the sea, if it should agree with him, and that he had come to the Isle of Man, understanding that the air was milder than in England. 'I did not wish,' he continued, 'to go further from home. I consider myself in a precarious state, and, if it please God, would prefer breathing my last sigh in my own house, and sleeping in the grave of my fathers.' He concluded the conversation, by requesting that I would visit him.

"You may suppose that I was not long in doing so, struck, as I was, with his appearance, and anxious to be of service to him. I found him at one of the cottages at Mona

Crescent. When I first entered his drawing-room, he was seated on the sofa, with a book in his hand, and his wife, a most interesting young creature, sat opposite, evidently employed in sketching, on a small piece of ivory, the features so dear to her. Her appearance, like that of her husband's, was delicate; but it did not seem to be occasioned by illness: it was, in her case, the action of the feelings on a constitution perhaps never robust. And the moment I saw her, I imagined that her journey through life, though hitherto a short one, had been marked with much mental anxiety and suffering. Her eyes were of the deepest blue, and beamed with peculiar expression from the dark eyebrows and raven hair which fell in rich glossy curls round the whitest and most beautiful throat I ever beheld. The colour, which faintly streaked her cheek, and dwelt on her lips, was of the palest pink, but had not a trace of sickness; and the predominant character of her countenance was, like that of her husband's, resignation. It seemed not, however, of the kind natural to her disposition; but deeply fixed there by circumstances, by affliction, by religion,—and still kept alive by daily anxiety. There was oc-

casionally an archness in her looks, which showed what the mind had been before it was corrected and matured by suffering. Her hand and foot were beautiful, but her figure had lost, for the time, the extreme lightness and symmetry which nature had bestowed on it.

"The manners of Mr. and Mrs. Denbigh were equally pleasing: their education had been excellent, and they had seen much of the world. But what I most admired in them was a practical religion, which silently governed every word and action. Of course, it was time alone which enabled me to form this judgment. I spent every evening I could spare with them, and ever returned home the happier and better for my visit. They both possessed strong good sense, joined to a constant wish to please each other, and make all around them happy. It is a pity, Arbuthnot, you have been so much engaged the last six months at Ramsey, or I might have introduced you to them."

"Say rather it is a blessing," returned his friend, "or I might also have been as miserable as you appear to be this evening; but what there is of disastrous in your story I am

yet to learn—for I think you told me when we first met you had just seen your friend off—how is his health?"

"Very far from improved! but I will continue.—The more I knew of them, the more they rose in my estimation; and I had at length the happiness of seeing an evident alteration for the better in Denbigh's health, and his wife's cheek more rosy, her eye more bright, in consequence. They now appeared perfectly happy: an unusually warm autumn allowed them to stroll about in the morning, and the evenings were devoted to music and conversation; and sometimes Mrs. Denbigh read aloud. Her voice was very pleasing, and she could read for hours without fatigue. I often think now that she over-exerted herself. But if it were named to her, she would never confess it; nor, indeed, did she seem in the least tired. About a fortnight since, I was about to leave Douglas for a few days. I was detained the whole week, and, on my return, went immediately to the Crescent. I found my patient pacing the drawing-room alone, and saw in his appearance a degree of feverish impatience I had never before witnessed. 'You are not well!' I said.

"'Ah, yes! I am well; but my wife is not. I was wrong in not thinking this was possible. We intended being at home at the time of her confinement; and, as you know, talked of leaving this place in about a fortnight; but I fear it will be too late.'

"'Do not despair,' said I cheerfully; 'Mrs. Denbigh may soon be better.' And I left him, and went to see her. She was in a tolerably favourable state; and, after promising to call in the morning, I left, but not before her husband had regained his composure.

"Before the night closed in, I was again sent for, and found Mrs. Denbigh very ill. With morning dawn the first smile of rapture beamed on the mother's lip, and the first faint cry of infancy was heard; but it was, alas! the last. For some time I feared to say that the poor babe was gone; but she herself divined it.

"'That one weak cry,' she said, 'and no more. Mr. Gustane, you will not let me see my child: it is surely dead.' She then burst into tears, and wept bitterly. 'I had hoped to have had some tie on earth if my poor Edward went, and I meet but another disappointment.' Then, shocked at what she had

said, she hastily exclaimed, 'O no, no! I mean not that: I am very wrong! Pardon! pardon!' she whispered, clasping her hands, 'I ought to be—I trust I am—thankful that my own life is spared: I suppose I am going on pretty well.'

"I told her to compose herself, and I hoped she would soon be.

"'Is it doubtful, then?' she asked eagerly. But at the moment a faintness came on, which prevented her saying more. When recovered, she asked to see her husband. He came; and, bending over her with his own calm smile, soothed her, and said, how happy he was to see her better. 'We will not think, my love,' said he, 'of our sad loss: surely it is for the best; and, indeed, I can think of nothing now but seeing my own dearest Ellen well again.' He kissed her forehead, and sat down by her, the tenderest of nurses, and best of friends. He never again left the room, till she was unconscious of his absence. Vain was every restorative: she became worse. I could not at all account for her illness; but I think that her feelings killed her—just then too weak to bear them —for even then her eye followed her hus-

band, and marked his feverish looks with dismay. I even saw her tremble slightly when his hot hand (hotter, perhaps, from anxiety on her own account) touched hers. The whole of the day Mr. Denbigh sat by his wife, and told her he would have a small bed in the room, for he would not leave her. But, alas! too surely this kindness, received by her with rapture, killed her. Had he been far away, his illness would not have been so present to her mind, and she might have been better; but, as it was, she was awake to every unfavourable symptom. She scarcely ever dozed, or, when she did, she awoke suddenly, exclaiming, 'I thought you were gone! but you are still here, thank God!'

"As night approached, I saw in her speaking countenance her suspicions. At last, she said, 'Mr. Gustane, why did your hand shake so when you gave me that draught? I don't know how it is, but I think I get no better; perhaps a little worse. Dearest! I would not for worlds alarm you, but he can tell us how I really am! and, Mr. Gustane, do not deceive us; it would be better to know the worst!'

"'My love,' said her husband quickly,

'you are only tired. Do not indulge such fears; I am sure you are only tired. A good night would quite refresh you.'

"'It would, indeed,' sighed Mrs. Denbigh; but her lips closed as she spoke, and again she fainted. It was now no time to deceive; nor, indeed, was it necessary: at once her husband saw her danger.

"'O God!' he exclaimed; 'this is, indeed, a blow; but thy will be done!' When she again revived, words were not wanting to express the feelings of the party.

"'I should like to see a clergyman,' she said; 'but as you choose, my love. "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and have no fear.' From this time she spoke only at intervals, and was often fainting and exhausted. 'Dearest, repeat to me the twenty-third Psalm, over and over again: I always thought how beautiful it was, but knew not until now, how blessed. Yes!' she continued with energy, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." Do you go on, love; my thoughts are confused.' He continued the psalm, and at times kept repeating those portions of Scripture he knew she loved best,

or thought most applicable to their situation.

"'I had hoped, dear Edward, to have nursed you well again. My only regret is for what you will suffer.'

"'Think not of me, beloved,' said he; 'a few months, and the trials of this world will be over. What matters it, if it please the Almighty and all-merciful God, for his own good purpose, to fill my cup of woe to overflowing?'

"'Always, always the same,' said she; 'so very, very good and resigned. I need not, indeed, fear for you; the Holy Spirit himself is your comforter, and all his fruits are visible in your life:—"Love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, patience, quietness, long-suffering." How happy I am in having such a husband,—one whom assuredly I shall meet again when all tears are wiped from all eyes.'

"'Ellen!' said her husband in a low tone, but she did not answer—'dearest Ellen!'—At that moment a few tears escaped from her eyes, and she opened them, and looked at him with a melancholy expression.

"'What will they say at home, when they

know I am dead, and that so suddenly too? I dread the thoughts of their grief. They say the grief of a parent for a child exceeds all other grief. Ah! tell them not to lament; give them a portion of your resignation; and bid them remember that their child is in heaven. I do not deceive myself,' she continued, after a pause; 'I am assuredly redeemed by his blood; I shall be washed from my sins, and clothed in my Saviour's righteousness. Speak—tell me—'

"'Most certainly, dearest,' answered her husband; 'you have no cause to fear; for, as sure as the Scriptures are true, so surely you will be among the blessed. Thanks to the Giver of all good gifts, you have not now to learn religion; not now to learn to love your God.' She smiled sweetly, and pressed her lips to the hand that supported her head. 'Go on, my own best and kindest comforter.'

"'I will go on,' he continued; 'I will tell you of the glory of heaven—the ecstatic rapture of joining the redeemed. I will rejoice with you that your course is finished, and that "the earthly tabernacle is about to be dissolved, for a house not made with hands,

eternal in the heavens." Oh! my wife, think on what your Saviour suffered to procure you these blessings, and throw yourself entirely on his mercy. Even now his never-dying pity supports you; his never-failing arms embrace you!'

"'I know it,' she exclaimed, in a clear, loud voice; 'and eternity will be too short to speak my praise, my gratitude. I cannot sufficiently feel my immense debt to him: but I thank him that I do feel it to be beyond all measure, exceeding all bounds, infinitely beyond even my comprehension.'

"You are not to suppose, Charles, that this conversation all passed at one time: far from it. But this, and much more, did pass in the course of the night, which, though I may not repeat the whole to you, made an undying impression on my memory. Never, indeed, did I behold such a scene. The husband, who might be supposed borne down with grief, never for one moment, after he saw his wife's danger, remembered himself or his own feelings, but every instant was devoted to her: and he seemed almost miraculously supported, that he might comfort the dying bed, and speak peace, hope, and assurance, to the

departing spirit. She suffered not, except from fainting or exhaustion; and every interval, in which she was equal to it, was spent in the manner I have described. How fervently did I, while gazing on her, pray that I also might die the death of the righteous, and that my last end might be like that of the being before me, who even now appeared scarcely earthly.

"The clergyman, who had been sent for, arrived just as day was dawning. I almost feared he was too late; for since she had last revived, she had never spoken; but I was mistaken. The husband told her he was come, and a slight flush crossed her face, and she smiled more sweetly than I had ever before beheld her. He came up stairs, and, at Mr. Denbigh's request, read the prayers for the dying. She then asked her husband to support her, as, if possible, she should love—I am sure that was the word—to receive the sacrament. I saw at this time she was much oppressed, and asked if she would have the window opened?

"'He will take cold,' she said; but it was opened, and revived her. Some curls had escaped from her cap, and the breeze from the sea (it was a mild November morning)

gently raised them from her neck, while a few rays from the rising sun, struggling through a slight fog, threw an unearthly light upon her. Her husband's arms were round her, and her head leaned on his shoulder, while her clasped hands, and her eyes, were raised towards heaven. At this moment, the clergyman approached to give her the wine. Her husband put one hand to the glass; she laid hers on it, and, for the last time, her lips parted, to receive food from heaven. Her hand fell from his; her head sunk with a heavier weight, and murmuring, 'Blessed God, I thank thee!' her spirit fled for ever to realms of heavenly bliss.

"Mr. Denbigh gazed on her for a time, as if he could not believe that she was really gone: he felt her pulse, her heart, placed his lips on hers, to see if no breath remained, and tried, though in vain, every restorative. It was now, indeed, no fainting fit. A beautiful smile was on her face, and most truly might it be said of her, that the 'rapture of repose' was on her countenance.

"'Is it possible?' said he, at length, 'lately so happy, so blessed, now a bereaved father and husband? But thou, O God, knowest

best! Let the boy be placed in his mother's arms,' he continued, 'that I may see together those dearest to me. My wife! my wife! are you, indeed, lost to me for ever?' As he spoke, he threw himself by her side, and gave way to a burst of grief. After a time, he raised his head, and spoke to me:—

"'Mr. Gustane, leave me; I will compose myself, and come to you presently.' I waited some time: he came not; but a bell rung, and I myself went to answer it.

"'I cannot speak to you to-day,' said he; 'but will you be kind enough to come to me to-morrow? Alas! I have too much to arrange. You need not fear for me; I shall be better.' And as he spoke, the faint smile so natural to him, for a moment glanced across his face. I pressed his extended hand, and left him, first persuading him to take some composing medicines, for I saw he would be better alone.

"You may imagine my feelings, Arbuthnot. As I walked home, the fog, which the sun had in vain endeavoured to dispel, now fell in that slow drizzling rain so common here. The retiring waves broke sullenly and moodily against the pebbly shore; and the wind sighed

through the rocks, as if confined, from its own common violence, by some stronger power. It seemed to me as if all nature mourned the death of her fairest flower. My feelings sympathized with her, and my senses seemed lost in a fearful dream. I could not for some time collect my thoughts, and had almost reached the town before I regained, in any degree, my self-possession.

"I went the next day to see my friend; for so I had for some time called Mr. Denbigh. Unannounced, I entered the room where they usually sat, but now it was vacant, and every thing in it recalled the lost one to my mind. On a work-table was a basket, from which hung an unfinished child's frock. A landscape also was there, in which I had assisted, having painted in it the sea, for she had laughingly told me she was not so well acquainted with it as myself. A letter, directed to her father, but which had not been sent to the post, lay on the chimney-piece; but what most afflicted me was the harp, which was pushed aside from the music-stool, as if she had just risen from it. I could scarcely believe I should not again meet her, and looked eagerly to the door, as if expecting her en-

trance; but a moment restored me to myself, and I tried to fix my mind on other thoughts. I approached the breakfast-table: on it lay a Bible. It had been hers; but it was now marked by her husband's tears. It was open at the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, (that beautiful chapter from which thousands have drawn consolation,) and some of the verses were marked in pencil. The pencil which had belonged to Mrs. Denbigh was on the book, and with it he had marked and remarked several of the verses, beginning, 'Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.' I was still employed in studying the holy volume, and endeavouring to gather comfort from it, when Mr. Denbigh entered. I was grieved to see the alteration already made in his appearance, though I know not why; for there could be no real cause for regret in beholding him hastening a little more rapidly than heretofore to his long home. He was perfectly composed and tranquil. He requested me to add to the benefits which I had already conferred on him, by taking on myself the trouble of consigning his Ellen to the grave. 'I had thought,' he said, 'of

taking her remains immediately to England; for even that would have been a kind of comfort to me; but it is all folly: she will sleep as peacefully in yonder village church-yard as in her own native soil; and though our bodies will not rest together, that signifies but little, if our immortal spirits hold communion together.'

"I was with him some hours; and, during the whole of that time, there was no change in him: resignation was visible in every look and word, even while he loved to speak of his wife, and recal her excellencies.

"When I left, it was, if possible, with a greater admiration of him than I had ever before felt, and with an increased veneration for that holy book, from which he had drawn such deep and pleasant draughts of the waters of life. 'It is true,' said he, 'that bitter trials have of late years been much mingled in my lot; yet few hours have passed in which I have not been able to say, "Thy comforts, O Lord, have refreshed my soul." 'Think you,' he continued, 'I could be as you behold me, after my heavy afflictions, if I did not possess that peace which the world knoweth not, but which passeth all under-

standing? Oh! my friend, seek—earnestly "seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near." Wait not until "the evil days draw nigh, in which you shall say, I have no pleasure in them;" but seek an interest in the Lord of righteousness, while you are young; take him for your portion, and your hope, and remember "that those who go unto him he will in no wise cast out." Oh! what a God of compassion and long-suffering is our God!"

"Thus, Arbuthnot, talked this excellent man, and thus he endeavoured to make his own afflictions useful to others. I hope the good seed has not been sown entirely in vain!

"I visited him constantly, and spent every moment with him I could possibly spare, and ever found him the same. What most surprised me in him, was the uniformity of his conduct. Never did I see the least impatience under suffering, or irritability of temper, except at the time when his wife was first taken ill. From that moment, he seemed to kiss the chastening rod, and to draw—as he himself expressed it, 'comfort largely from the waters of life.' Many pious, many virtuous

people I have known, but never any one except him, in whom natural sin and infirmity were so much lost in grace and new being. Perhaps it is, that being himself so nearly on the confines of eternity, he is enabled to show God's strength in man's weakness, and to stand a shining and a burning light for a time, until he shall be lost for ever to mortal sight in the gulf to which he is daily and hourly approaching.

"This morning, Charles," continued Mr. Gustane, in even a more serious tone than he had hitherto spoken, "was fixed on for Mrs. Denbigh's funeral: you know the village church which rises a little beyond the Crescent:—there all of her that could die is buried.

"I looked forward to this day with a degree of solemn dread. It is always an awful thing to commit dust to its native dust; but it is still more awful when we follow to the tomb the loved, the beautiful, and young, suddenly called from the world which they adorned, to stand the trial for things done in the body. Besides, I feared for my friend; I feared lest 'the golden bowl would be broken,' and 'the silver cord snapt,' lest the body, so

weakened by disease, would no longer be able to bear the trial of the mind; but I was happily mistaken. Though very weak, he was stronger than I imagined, and his resignation remained unshaken. Leaning on my arm, he slowly ascended the steep hill beyond which the church is situated: his difficulty of breathing was great, and he often stopped exhausted. Once I asked him if he suffered much.

"'No, I thank you,' he replied; 'I have little pain; it is only fatigue.' He listened with steady composure to the funeral service, and seemed comforted by it; but when the coffin was lowered into the grave, a deadly paleness overspread his countenance. I took his arm, to lead him from the spot; but he resisted my endeavours, and stood as it were rooted there, watching the sexton throw each spadeful of earth into the grave. He shuddered so violently as the sound of the falling clods grated on his ear, that I dreaded the consequences. He remained gazing there, however, till not a vestige remained of her he loved; and then, turning to me, he said in a low, hoarse voice:—

"'Send that man away, and let me, for the last time, pray by my wife's side.'

"I did as he requested me; when, throwing himself on the ground, he wept long and bitterly. I felt that this would be a relief to his overcharged feelings, though the cold air was little suited to one in his state of health; but I thought it signified little; and I did not name it to him. He suddenly seemed aware that I was witnessing his deep sorrow.

"'Leave me, dear Gustane,' said he; 'I shall sooner recover if I am left alone to commune with my God.'

"I complied with his wish at once: but how differently was my time spent from his! I too indulged in a grief I could no longer check; but with an irritable and impatient spirit I trod and re-trod some village graves, my heart more hardened than improved by all that I had witnessed. I know not how long a time I remained thus impatient of suffering, nor to what a height my rebellious spirit might have risen, had not Mr. Denbigh come to seek me. His appearance had its never-failing effect on me—it at once soothed me; but he saw in my countenance traces of my emotion.

"'My friend,' he said, 'I could not think that you had left me—and yet, had I not cause? I have taken my last earthly leave of my now blessed wife. Never again shall I behold the place where she reposes, but our spirits will soon meet in everlasting happiness. My regret is now purely selfish: she is spared the suffering I alone endure, and I ought to be thankful; for her more ardent feelings would have grieved more keenly than even mine. I have one more favour to request of you: it is, that you will superintend the putting up of a small tablet to her memory. I will, before I leave, give you a sketch and inscription: I could not bear that my dear Ellen's grave should be alike unnoticed and unmourned.'

"We soon reached my friend's now desolate house, when he told me that he had made his arrangements for leaving in the packet about to sail.

"'I have many friends in England,' he continued, "and I ought to go to them immediately. I know that it would ill become me to rely on the morrow; but how I dread the meeting! The mother will ask me for her child; the brother for his sister; and what

can I answer them? Ah! my wife! my wife! would that I had died for thee!'

"The time was now approaching fast, when the steam-packet was to leave the island. The carriage had arrived to take my friend to the pier—the servants had arranged the luggage—I had persuaded him to take some of the dinner which had been prepared for him, and all was ready; but still he lingered: he gazed round the room with a melancholy look. I pressed him to go.

"'You are right,' he said; 'why (now that I have parted with all I love) do I dread to leave inanimate objects? But it is always thus. I would willingly stay for ever where my last of earthly happiness has passed away. I would that your hand should close my eyes —your friendly voice speak comfort to my departing spirit; but it must not be.' As he spoke, he rose, and appeared as if about to leave the room, when the harp, the only object remaining, besides the place itself, to revive remembrance, attracted his lingering eyes.

"'That dear harp!' he said. 'Never more shall I hear its tone—never more will her dear fingers fly along the strings!' As

he spoke, almost unconsciously, he approached it, and drew his hand along the wires. He started at the sound he had so thoughtlessly produced, and I sprang towards him.

"'For God's sake,' I said, 'come away; indeed I cannot bear this.' He perceived the emotion on my countenance with surprise.

"'Forgive me,' he said; 'I knew not that your feelings were so strong; I thought only of indulging my own. I am ready.' I assisted him into the carriage in silence; he gazed from the window for a time. 'On that low wall,' said he, 'she sat, when the day before her illness we walked together: she seemed tired even then, but would not own it.'

"'Ah! this is worse than madness!' he continued, after a pause; and, drawing in his head, he threw himself back, — nor did he speak again until we reached the pier. He was now so weak and exhausted that he could scarcely stand, and I willingly accompanied him in the first boat that left the shore. I persuaded him, when arrived on board, to lie down, and sat by his side, until obliged to leave the ship. He never again named his

afflictions. He thanked me warmly for my kindness, and told me that he should never lose the remembrance of that friendship, which he trusted would bloom again. He looked at me with an inquiring eye. 'Dear Gustane,' he said, 'I know little, nothing of your religious feelings. I only know that you are always kind, benevolent, and considerate. But this is not enough. Promise me that you will not only recollect the scenes you have witnessed, but that you will lay them to heart, and strive to enter in at the strait gate. Promise me that it shall be your endeavour that we may meet again.' I did promise; and he continued—'Then I have no fear. You cannot study the Holy Scriptures in a prayerful and humble spirit, without imbibing a portion of their saving truth. You cannot endeavour daily to love and serve God, without succeeding. You will find in that holy book almost endless encouragements to those who go to the Lord! Thus, my friend, we do not now separate for ever!' He smiled sweetly as he spoke, and, after a pause, continued—'Do not be uncomfortable on my account: I am going to near and valued relatives, who will lavish a thousand cares on me, and I am not

even now unhappy. I cannot pretend to say I wish to live—and I know that my present complaints, sooner or later, must terminate my life. I fancied that, with the care and tender nursing I so lately received, I might have survived some years; but the shock I have lately suffered, has, I perceive, altered my health materially. I cannot regret it: I never wished to outlive my power of being useful in the world, for we know this is but a state of trial and probation, and it has always appeared to me unworthy of a rational and immortal spirit to fear death. Life is only given to us for one purpose—"To make our calling and election sure." Ought we, then, to fear the moment in which we shall see clearly, when, our education being finished, we enter on that state for which we were originally intended? Surely not.' At this moment the steward warned me that I must depart, as the last boat was by the side of the ship, and she was already in motion. Most unwillingly did I quit my friend, nor, indeed, would I have quitted him, but I knew that he had well-tried and faithful servants with him, who would take every care of one now so much in want of it. For one moment, we warmly clasped each

other's hands. 'We shall meet again,' he said, with the same sweet and heavenly smile I have so often described.

"'I trust we shall,' I repeated; and again eagerly pressing his hand, rushed from him, and in another instant was seated in the boat. When you saw me, Arbuthnot, I know not how long I had been in that position: I had then only one distinct feeling, and that was misery. The mere repetition of Mr. and Mrs. Denbigh's words and actions has soothed me, and even now I think that I see them as when first I visited the Crescent. That time is for ever gone; but the recollection of it will still remain associated with many a pleasing thought." He stopped, and Mr. Arbuthnot thanked him for the history, to which he had listened with much sympathy.

"And, Mr. Denbigh," he said, "shall you hear from him?"

"Most certainly I shall," said Mr. Gustane.

"You will then tell me the result; but I fear there is little doubt about it."

"None at all, as far as I can judge, nor should we be his friends if we wished it otherwise. I must not forget my promise to him,"

he said. They were then silent; and soon afterwards, Mr. Arbuthnot took his leave.

During the course of the winter Mr. Gustane had several short letters from Mr. Denbigh. They all breathed the same spirit of resignation, and contained information of his gradual, but slow decline. "So very gradual is it," he said, "that I sometimes doubt whether returning spring may not again renovate my health."

It was a lovely day in April—one of those days on which all nature rejoices—when life seems springing from beneath your feet—that Mr. Gustane left his home to take a walk, which he had long deferred. It was to the grave of Ellen Denbigh. As he turned from the house, he met his friend Arbuthnot, who, with a smile, exclaimed,

"You have just anticipated my request. I was going to ask you to take a stroll this beautiful day!"

"Willingly," said Mr. Gustane; "but will you join me in my ramble? I am going beyond the Crescent." The serious expression of his eye told his friend where. He replied only by taking his arm; and, descending to

the sands, they walked on, enjoying the calm sea air, and the brilliant sunshine, the more delightful after a long and gloomy winter. Their conversation, while they walked, though serious, was pleasing, and naturally reverted to Mr. Gustane's late friends.

"It is more than a month," he said, "since I have heard from England; but the mail is expected to-day, and I shall certainly hear from, or of, my friend. By the time that we return, I dare say the vessel will be visible: indeed, I fancied just now that I saw the smoke in the distance."

"I see nothing," returned Mr. Arbuthnot; "but, indeed, these glorious rays so dazzle my eyes, unused of late to so much brilliancy, that I am half blinded by them; but, if you are right, we shall return to Douglas just in time." As he spoke, they walked briskly again, for they had stopped to look, with shaded and aching eyes, for the object they wished to behold. Nor will any one who has been at Douglas, wonder at the earnestness with which these two young men sought for the packet. Those only who have experienced the annoyance of receiving news only once, or, in the summer months, twice a

week,* can conceive the anxiety with which the mail is expected, or the eager bustle of the various public news-rooms.

The friends soon reached the small and simple churchyard, so often named, and Mr. Gustane hastened to point out Ellen's grave, which he now first saw completed. A white marble urn, raised on a pedestal, marked the place, and bore on each side an inscription: I give the last:

"Reader, may her lot be thine! She was an humble Christian!"

"May her lot, indeed, be ours!" said Mr. Gustane, with a smile. "We cannot wish a happier. Though only twenty-one, cut off in the bloom of youth and health, she is only moved from a world of suffering, and blooms in paradise a fairer flower. Who could regret, if they, as fit to die, were safely landed on that happy shore?"

"Who, indeed!" rejoined Arbuthnot; "but 'IF' is the question, and one of magnitude enough to make——"

"The boldest THINK," interrupted his friend. "I thank God the lesson I have

* When these circumstances took place, the packets were much less frequent than at present.

learned has not been in vain. This," he continued, "shall be my favourite walk. Here I will cast away all worldly thoughts and feelings. To this grave, with God's blessing, I will never come, except to commune with myself, and think on heaven, and sacred things. Here, remembering that I am mortal, I will seek the way to a glorious immortality. Yes, this shall often be my resting-place, for here I shall find comfort, strength, and peace. "Perhaps," he continued, "no scene is more likely to impart these blessings, than a country churchyard, and by the grave of such a being as this was, surely one cannot fail to gain them."

They remained for some time longer in deep and improving conversation; or at times they sat in silence, and meditated on death and judgment: at length, they left the place.

"I go not for long," said Mr. Gustane, with a smile; "the dread I felt at coming has vanished, and pleasing recollections are now for ever associated in my mind with this churchyard. It seems to me a spot where peace and happiness rest, and I could fancy myself already better for my short sojourn here."

From the top of the hill, which they were now descending, they saw that they had not been mistaken in their expectations. The steam-packet was coming quickly to anchor, and, with hasty steps, they proceeded to the town. The letters were soon dispersed, but Mr. Gustane was disappointed at finding there was not one for him.

"I regret it, also," said Mr. Arbuthnot; "I wished much to hear how Mr. Denbigh was. But come," he said, "let us go to the news-room, and console ourselves for the loss of private, in the perusal of public, news."

Mr. Gustane agreed, and they were proceeding there, when they met his servant, with a small parcel in his hand. Mr. Gustane's heart misgave him, as he looked at it, and, being not far from home, they immediately went thither. The parcel contained a short letter from Mr. Denbigh's brother, a funeral scarf, a ring, which he had always worn, and which contained his wife's hair, and a newspaper. Mr. Gustane covered his face with his hands for a while, and was silent. When he removed them, he looked pale, but composed. He opened the letter, which contained a short account of Mr. Denbigh's death, and his wish

that his friend might be informed of it. "It was," said the letter, "like his life, peaceful, happy, and resigned. He apparently suffered no pain, and the last expression of his countenance was a smile. His last words were, "Blessed God and Saviour, thy will be mine!"

The newspaper contained the following notice of his death.—"On the 2nd instant at —— in the 26th year of his age, Edward Denbigh, universally beloved—a sincere friend —an honest man—and an humble Christian!"

THE END.

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